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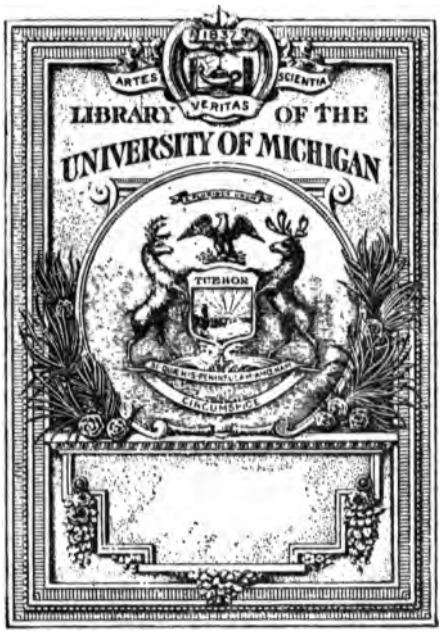
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THE MAN WHO DID THE RIGHT THING

NOVELS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE GAY-DOMBEYS

MRS. WARREN'S DAUGHTER

THE MAN WHO DID THE RIGHT THING

A ROMANCE

BY

SIR HARRY JOHNSTON

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1921

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THE central idea of this book came into my mind a great many years ago, out in Africa, and was based to some extent on what actually happened at Unguja and elsewhere. Yet, though there is more realism than might be supposed in my descriptions and incidents and the imagined personalities that appear in these pages, I have endeavoured so to disturb and re-present the facets of my truths that they shall not wound the feelings of any one living or of the surviving friends and relations of the good and bad people I have known in East Africa, or of those in my own land who were entangled in East African affairs.

But although I have pondered long over telling such a story, this Romance of East Africa was mainly projected, created and put down on paper when my wife and I stayed in the summer-autumn of last year at the Swiss home, in the mountains, of a dear friend. There we amused ourselves, as we swung in hammocks slung under pine-trees and gazed over the panorama of the Southern Alps, by arguing and discussing as to what the creations of my imagination would say to one another, how they would act under given circumstances within the four corners ruled by Common Sense and Probability: two guides who will, I hope, always guard my faltering steps in fiction-writing.

Therefore, though dedications have lost their novelty and freshness, and are now incitements to preciosity or payments in verbiage, I, to satisfy my own sentiments of gratitude for a most delightful holiday of rest and refreshment, dedicate this Romance to my hostess of the Châlet Soleil, who founded this new Abbaye de Theleme for the recuperation of tired minds and bodies, and enforced within its walls and walks and woods but one precept:

FAY CE QUE VOULDRAS.

H. H. JOHNSTON.

POLING,
March, 1921.

382146

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THE MAN WHO DID THE RIGHT THING

CHAPTER I

THE BAINESES

IT was in the last week of June, 1886, and there really were warm and early summers in the nineteenth century.

The little chapel had been so close and hot during the morning service that in spite of the interest Lucy Josling felt in the occasion — it was the first appearance of her betrothed, John Baines, as a preacher in his native place, and the delivery of his farewell sermon before starting for Africa — she could not repress a sigh of relief as she detached herself from the perspiring throng of worshippers and stood for a few moments in the bright sunlight, inhaling the perfume of distant hayfields.

"You look a trifle pale, Lucy," said Mr. Baines, senior, a stumpy red-faced man with light sandy hair and a long upper lip. "It's precious warm. I s'pose you'n John'll want to walk back together? Well, don't keep dinner waiting, 'cos that always puts me out. Now then, Sarah, come along: it's too hot to stand gossiping about. Let's get home as quick as we can."

Mrs. Baines, a gaunt, thin woman with a long parchment-coloured face and cold grey eyes, looked indignantly at her husband when he talked of gossiping, but said nothing, took his arm and walked away.

Lucy put up her parasol and leant against the ugly

iron railings which interposed between the dusty chapel windows and the pavement. The congregation had not all dispersed. Two or three awkward-looking young men were standing in a group in the roadway, and, while pretending to carry on a jesting conversation amongst themselves, were casting sheepish looks at Lucy, who was deemed a beauty for ten miles round. They evidently alluded to her in the witticisms they exchanged, so that she had to restrict her angle of vision in case her eyes met theirs when she wished to ignore their offensive existence. Mrs. Garrett, the grocer's wife, who had been inquiring from Miss Simons, the little lame dressmaker — why were village dressmakers of that period, in life and in fiction, nearly always lame? — how her married sister progressed after a confinement, walked up to Lucy and said:

"Well, Miss Josling, and how d'you like the idea of parting with your young man? Ain't cher afraid of his goin' off so far, and all among savages and wild beasts too, same as 'e was tellin' on? It's all right and proper as how he should carry the news of the Gospel to them pore naked blacks, but as I says to Garrett, I says, ''E don't ought to go and engage 'isself before'and to a girl as 'e mayn't never come back to marry, and as 'll spend the best years of 'er life a-waitin' an' a-waitin' and cryin' 'er eyes out to no use.' However, 't ain't any business of mine, an' I s'pose you've set your heart upon 'im now, and won't thank me for bein' so outspoken. . . . ?

"I'm sure 'e's come back from London *quite* the gentleman; and lor'! 'Ow proud 'is mother *did* look while 'e was a-preachin'. An' 'e *can* preach, too! 'Alf the words 'e used was Greek to me. . . . S'pose they *was* Greek, if it comes to that"— she laughed fatly — "Though why th' Almighty should like Greek and Latin better'n plain English, or even 'Ebrew, is what I never could understand. . . .

"And to think as I remember 'im, as it on'y seems the other day, comin' in on the sly to buy a 'aporth of sugar-candy at our shop. 'Is mother never liked 'is eatin' between meals an' 'e always 'ad to keep 'is bit o' candy 'idden away in 'is pocket till 'e was out of 'er sight. . . . I'm sure for my part I wonder *'ow* she can bring 'erself to part with 'im, 'e bein' 'er on'y son, and she so fond of 'im too. But then she always set 'er 'eart on 'is bein' a gentleman, and give 'im a good eddication. . . . 'Ow's father and mother? . . ."

"Oh quite well, thank you," replied Lucy, wondering why John was stopping so long and exposing her to this tiresome garrulity and the hatefulness of having her private affairs discussed in a loud tone for the benefit of the Sunday strollers of Tilehurst. "They would have come over from Aldermaston to hear John preach, but father cannot bear to take his eyes off the hay till it's all carried, and mother's alone now because my sisters are away. . . . I just came by myself to the Baineses' for the day. . . .

"And, Mrs. Garrett," continued Lucy, a slight flush rising to her cheek, "I don't think you quite understand about my engagement to John Baines. I — I — am not at all to be pitied. You rather ought to congratulate me. First, because I am very — er — fond of him and proud of his dedicating his life to such a work, and, secondly, because there is no question of my waiting years and years before I get married. John goes out this month and I shall follow six or seven months afterwards — just to give him time to get our home ready. We shall be married out there, at a place called Unguja, where there is a Consulate. . . ."

Lucy stopped short. She was going on to give other good reasons for her engagement when a slight feeling of pride forbade her further to excuse herself to Mrs. Garrett — a grocer's wife! And she herself a National school-teacher! There could be no community

between them. She therefore fell silent and gazed away from Mrs. Garrett's red face and blue bonnet across the white sandy road blazing with midday sunshine to the house fronts of the opposite side, with their small shops closed, the blinds drawn down and everything denoting the respectable lifelessness of the Sabbath. . . . At this awkward pause John Baines issued from the vestry door of the chapel, Mrs. Garrett nodded good-naturedly, and went her way.

John was about four-and-twenty — Lucy's age. He was a little over the average height but ungainly, with rather sloping shoulders, long arms, large hands and feet; a face with not well-formed features; nose coarse, fleshy, blunt-tipped; mouth wide, with his father's long upper lip, on which were the beginnings of a flaxen moustache, with tame ends curling down to meet the upward growth of the young beard. He had an under lip that was merely a band of pink skin round the mouth, without an inward curve to break its union with the broad chin. His teeth were strong and white but irregular in setting, the canines being thrust out of position. His eyes were blue-grey, and not without a pleasant twinkle. The hair was too long for tidiness, not long enough for eccentric saintliness. It was a yellow brown and was continued down the cheeks in a silken beard from ear to ear, the tangled, unclipped, uncared-for beard of a young man who has never shaved. His fresh pink-and-white complexion was marred here and there with the pimples and blotches of adolescence. Lucy, however, thought him good to look at; he only wanted a little smartening up, which she promised herself to impart to him when they were married. He looked what he was: a good-hearted, simple-minded, unintellectual Englishman, an Anglo-Saxon, with a hearty appetite for plain food, a love of cricket, who would with little difficulty remain in all things chaste and sober; slow to wrath, but, if really

pushed against the wall, able to show berserker rage.

Having taken up a religious career he had acquired a certain pomposity of manner which sat ill on his boyishness; he had to remember in intervals of games or country dances or flirtations that he had been set apart for the Lord's work. But he would make an excellent husband. His class has furnished quite the best type of colonist abroad.

John gave his arm silently to Lucy, who took it with a gesture of affection, and patted it once or twice with her kid-gloved hand, which lover-like demonstrations John accepted rather solemnly. As they walked up the sunny main street there was little conversation between them, but when they turned down an old shady road running between red brick walls overgrown with ivy and Oxford weed, behind which rose the spire of St. Michael's and the tall trees of its churchyard, their good behaviour relaxed and John looking down, and seeing Lucy's fresh, pretty face looking up, and observing in a hasty glance around that nobody was in sight, bent down and kissed her: after which he looked rather silly and hurried on with great strides.

"Don't walk so fast, John dear; you quite drag me along. We need not be in such a hurry. Tell me, how did you spend your last days in London?"

"Why, Wednesday I went to the outfitters to superintend the packing of my boxes; Thursday I bid good-bye to all my friends at the Bayswater College. In the evening there was a valedictory service at the Edgware Road Chapel, when Thomas, Bayley, Anderson and I were designated for the East African Mission. The next day, Friday, I went in the morning to see my boxes put safely on board the *Godavery* lying in the Albert Docks; and I also chose my berth — I share a cabin with Anderson. Then in the afternoon there was a big public meeting at Plymouth Hall. Sir Powell Buckley was chairman, and Brentham, the African

explorer, spoke, as well as a lot of others, and it ended with prayers and hymns. The Reverend Paul Barker, a very old African missionary, who was the first to enter Abeokuta, delivered the Blessing. Every one shook hands with us and bade us Godspeed.

"After this the three brethren designated for the Mission, and myself, of course, together with Brentham the explorer, Mr. Barker and a few others from the platform, adjourned to Sir Powell Buckley's, where we had tea. Here we four new missionaries were introduced to old Mrs. Doland, that lady who, under God, has so liberally contributed to the support of the East African Mission. . . . And also to Captain Brentham, who has just returned from the East coast. . . .

"I confess I didn't like *him* . . . altogether. . . . In fact, I can't *quite* make out why he came and spoke at the meeting, for I could see at once by the way he stared about him during the hymns he was not one of us . . . in heart. In his speech at Plymouth Hall he chiefly laid stress on the advantages gained by civilization when a country was opened up by missionaries, how we taught the people trades, and so on. There was no allusion to the inestimable boon to the natives in making known the Blessed Gospel and the promises in the Old Testament. . . .

"In fact — am I walking too fast? But father will be angry if we are late for dinner — in fact, I thought Brentham inclined to sneer at us. They say he wants a Government appointment and is making up to Sir Powell Buckley ——

"Then Saturday — yesterday — I came down here — and — er — well! here we are! Are you listening?"

Lucy gave John's arm an affectionate squeeze by way of assurance, but on this rare June day there was something in the still, hot air, thick with hay-scent,

which lulled her sensibilities and caused her to forget to be concerned at her betrothed's departure. She had temporarily forgotten many little things stored up to be said to him, and was vexed at her own taciturnity. However, their walk had come to an end, and they stood in front of John's home.

Mr. John Parker Baines, the father of the missionary-designate, was a manufacturer of aerated drinks and cider, whose premises lay on the western side of Tilehurst and marred the beauty of the countryside and the straggling village with a patch of uncompromising vulgarity and garishness. The manufactory itself was in a simple style of architecture: a rectangular building of red brick, with two tall smoke-blackened chimneys and a number of smaller ones. "John Baines and Co., Manufacturers of Aerated Drinks," was painted in large letters across the brick front.

A Sabbath stillness prevailed, intensified by the smokeless chimneys and the closed door. Only a cur lay in the sun, and some dirty ducks squittered the water in a dirty ditch which carried off the drainage of the factory to a neighbouring brook.

A short distance apart from the main building stood the dwelling of the proprietor, Mr. Baines, who had inherited the business from his wife's father and transferred it to his own name. This home of the Baines family, though designed by the same architect, had its aboriginal ugliness modified by numerous superficial improvements. A rich mantle of ivy overgrew a portion of its red brick walls and wreathed its ugly stucco portico. The window-panes were brightly polished and gave a vivacity to the house by their gleaming reflections of light and shade. You could see through them the green Venetian blinds of the sitting-rooms and the unpolished backs of looking-glasses and clean white muslin curtains of the bedrooms. In the short strip of front garden there were beds of scarlet gera-

niums which added a pleasant note of bright colour.

At the grained front door a cat was waiting to be let in with an air about her as if she too had returned a little late from church or chapel. A strong, rich odour of roast beef filled the air and drowned the scent of hayfields. This intensified the feeling of vulgar comfort which permeated the house when the door was opened by Mr. Baines, senior, and increased the pious satisfaction of the cat, who arched her black body and rubbed herself coyly against her master's Sunday trousers.

"Of course, you're late," snapped Mr. Baines. "I knew you would be. Here's mother, as cross as two sticks."

Mrs. Baines, who had stalked into the narrow hall from the dining-room, gave them no greeting, but merely called to Eliza to serve the dinner, as Mr. John and Miss Josling had arrived.

For Lucy this was not a pleasant meal. Mrs. Baines was one of those unsympathetic persons that took away her appetite. She was a thoroughly good woman in the estimation of her neighbours, austerely devout, rigidly honest, an able housewife and a strict mother. But her future daughter-in-law had long since classed her as thoroughly unlovable. The one tender feeling she evinced was her passionate though undemonstrative devotion to her only son. Even this, though it might beautify her dull being in the eyes of an unconcerned observer, did not always announce itself pleasantly to her home circle. To John it had often been the reason for a cruel smacking when a child and guilty of some small childish sin; to her husband it was the excuse for vexatious economies, which while they did not materially increase the funds devoted to his son's education, had frequently interfered with his personal comfort.

Mrs. Baines's love of John was further manifested

to Lucy by a jealous criticism of her speech and actions; for, like most mothers of an only son, she was bound to resent the bestowal of his affections on a sweetheart, and determined to be dissatisfied with whomever he might select for that honourable position.

So, although Lucy was pretty, relatively well-educated, earning her living already as a National schoolmistress, the daughter of a much-respected farmer, and known by the Baines family almost since she was a baby, Mrs. Baines found fault with her just because she had found favour with John. Lucy was "Church" and they were "Chapel." She was vain and worldly and quite unsuited to be the wife of a missionary. The fascination of worldliness was not denied. The Devil knew how to bait his traps. Through worldly influence one was led to read novels on the Sabbath, to dispute the Biblical account of the Creation.

Lucy, it is true, had neither scoffed at Genesis, nor spoken flippantly of Noah's Ark, nor been seen reading fiction on a Sunday; but that didn't matter. With her pretensions to an interest in botany, her talk about astronomy and the distances of the fixed stars and such like rubbish, she was quite capable of sliding into infidelity. And as to her observance of the Sabbath, it was simply disgraceful. Of course, her father was to blame in setting her a bad example and her mother, too, poor soul, was much too easy-going with her daughters. But then, when you came to consider that Lucy had been so much with John, to say nothing of the example set by John's parents, you would have thought she might have learnt by this time how the Lord's Day should be passed.

It was this last point which strained the relations between Mrs. Baines and Lucy on this particular Sunday. Lucy had asked John to take her for a walk in the afternoon. It would be their last opportunity

for a quiet talk all to themselves before his departure. Although John Baines had inherited his mother's Sabbatarian scruples he consented to Lucy's proposal, partly because he was in love with her, partly because his residence in London had insensibly broadened his views. For once his mother's influence was powerless to alter his decision, and so she had refrained from further argument. But this first check to her domination over her son had considerably soured her feelings.

Moreover, Mrs. Baines honestly believed, according to her lights — for like all the millions of her class and period she knew absolutely nothing about astronomy, geology, ethnology and history—that the Creator of the Universe preferred you should spend the Sunday afternoon in a small, stuffy back parlour with the blinds half down, reading the Bible or Baxter's sermons (or, if the spiritual appetite were very weak, an illustrated edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*) and continue this mortification of flesh and spirit until tea time (unless you taught in the Sunday-school). You should then wind up the Day of Rest with evening chapel, supper, more sermon-reading, and bed.

The only person disposed to be talkative during the meal was John Baines the younger. His mother, at all times glum, was more than ever inclined to silence. Lucy was oppressed by her frigid demeanour and vouchsafed very few remarks, other than those called for by politeness. As to Baines, senior, he was one of those short-necked, fleshy men who are born guzzlers, and his attention was too much concentrated on his food to permit of his joining in conversation during his Sunday dinner. As a set-off against abstention from alcohol he was inordinately greedy, and his large appetite was a constant source of suffering to him, for his wife took a grim delight in mortifying it. Only on Sundays was he allowed to eat his fill without her

interference. Mrs. Baines always did the carving and helped everything, even the vegetables, which were placed in front of her, flanking the joint. The maid-of-all-work, Eliza, waited at table and was evidently the slave of her mistress's eye. The family dinner on Sundays was almost invariable in its main features, as far as circumstances permitted. A well-roasted round of beef, with baked potatoes and Yorkshire pudding, was succeeded by an apple or a treacle pudding, and a dessert of some fruit or nuts in season. Of one thing there was no lack and abundant variety — effervescing, non-alcoholic drinks: Ginger Beer, Ginger Ale, Gingerade; Lemonade, Citronade, Orangeade; Phosphozone, Hedozone, Pyrodone, Sparkling Cider and Perry Champagne: all the beverages compounded of carbonic acid, tartaric acid, citric acid, sugar, water, apple and pear juice, and flavouring essences.

The Apple champagne that John gallantly poured into Lucy's glass did not lighten her spirits or loosen her tongue. What could she find to say to that guzzling father whose face and hands were always close to his plate, except during the brief intervals between the courses when he threw himself back in his chair, blew his nose, wiped his greasy lips, and passed his fat forefinger round the corners of his gums to remove the wedges of food which had escaped deglutition? Or to the gloomy mother who ate her victuals with a sullen champing, and, beyond a few directions to the submissive servant, made no attempts to sustain conversation, only according to the garrulous descriptions of her son an occasional snappish "Oh! indeed ——," "Pretty doings, *I* can see ——," "Little good can come of *that* ——," and so on? At length, when John's experiences in London had come to an end and the two dishes of cherries had replaced the treacle pudding, whilst the servant handed round in tumblers our own superlative Sparkling Cider, Lucy cleared her

throat and said, "I suppose John will be leaving you very early to-morrow morning?"

"Eh?" returned Mrs. Baines, fixing her cold grey eyes on Lucy. She had heard perfectly well, but she thought it more consistent with dignity not to lend too ready an ear to the girl's remarks. Lucy repeated more distinctly her question.

"You had better ask *him* all about it," replied John's mother. "I have other things to think about on the Lord's Day besides railway time-tables."

"Why? Are you coming to see me off, Lucy?" asked John.

"Well, yes; that is, if Mrs. Baines doesn't mind."

"*I* mind?" exclaimed the angry woman in a strident voice. "What have *I* got to do with it; I suppose railway stations are free to every one?"

"Yes," said Lucy, with an ache at the back of her throat and almost inclined then and there to break off her engagement. "But I thought you might like to have John all to yourself at the last. However, if you have no objection, I should much like to see him off, poor old fellow"—and Lucy gave his big-knuckled hand an affectionate pat—"I think I can manage it. Father has to come into Theale. He will drop me at the station and pick me up again, and school doesn't begin till nine. What time does your train go, John?"

"Twenty-five past seven. I shall get to London soon after nine. After going to the head-quarters of the Mission and getting my final instructions I shall drive straight down to the docks and go on board the *Godavery*. . . . The first place we stop at is Algiers, then Malta, then the Suez Canal and Aden. I expect this is just what *you'll* have to do, Lucy, when you come out next spring."

Lucy smiled brightly. She had gradually grown into her engagement as she grew from girlhood to womanhood, constrained by John's bland assumption

that the damsel he selected was bound to be his wife. But perhaps her main inducement was his fixed determination to become a missionary and her intense longing to see " foreign parts," the wonderful and the interesting world. She was just rallying her spirits to make some animated reply about Algiers when Mrs. Baines intervened and said there were limits to all things, and if they didn't wish to pass the whole of the Lord's Day eating, drinking, and talking they had better rise and let Eliza clear away. On hearing these words, Mr. Baines turned the last cherries into his plate and hastily biting them off and ejecting the stones, pushed his chair back with a sigh. Then, rising heavily, he stumbled into the armchair near the fireplace and composed himself for a nap. The maid began to clear away, longing to get back to her Sunday dinner and concealed novelette. Lucy went to put on her hat; John yawned and drummed his fingers on the window-pane; and Mrs. Baines seated herself stiffly in the armchair opposite her satiated husband, with a large brown Bible on her lap and two or three leaflets covered with small-print references to Scripture.

When John heard Lucy tripping downstairs he went to meet her, feeling instinctively that her re-appearance in the dining-room would draw some bitter comment from his mother. He put on his felt wide-awake, took a stout stick, and soon banged the front door on his sweetheart and himself in a way which sent a shiver through the frame of Mrs. Baines, who with an impatient sigh of disgust applied herself to a gloomy portion of the Old Testament.

Probably had John remained to keep her company she would have made no attempt to entertain him; but she would have applied herself with real interest to Scriptural exegesis. Of her class and of her time what little romance and intellectuality she had was put into Bible study. She believed the British —

degenerate though they might appear as to Sabbath observance — were descended from the Ten Lost Tribes, who had been led by the prophet Jeremiah to Ireland in an unnecessary spurt of energy and had then returned in coracles to the more favoured Britain, Jeremiah — age being of no moment where the Divine purpose was concerned — having taken in marriage a daughter of the Irish king ——

But . . . the ingratitude of her only son, who could not give up to his mother's society his last Sunday afternoon in England! She choked with unshed tears and read verse after verse of the early part of Jeremiah without understanding one word, although she was told in her leaflets that the diatribes bore special reference to England in the latter part of the nineteenth century. . . . No, the thought of John wandering about the hayfields with Lucy—for, of course, that girl would lead him into the hayfields, perhaps throw hay at him — constantly rose before her, and once or twice a few hot tears dimmed her sight. . . . "The Lord said also unto me in the days of Josiah the King: Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? . . ."

She had devoted all the money she could save, all the time she could spare to the bringing-up of this boy. She had sent him to college and made him a gentleman. She had done her duty by him as a mother, and this was the return he made. He preferred to spend his last Sunday afternoon frolicking about the country with a feather-headed girl to passing it quietly by his mother's side, as he formerly used to do. . . . They might even have had a word of prayer together. Mrs. Baines was not usually a woman who encouraged outbursts of vocal piety outside the chapel, but on such an occasion as this. . . . She might not see him for another five years. . . .

"And I said, after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not."— Now

was it becoming for a grown man, a missionary who had occupied the pulpit at Salem Chapel in the morning, to go gallivanting about the meadows with a young woman in the afternoon? What would any of the congregation say who saw him? A nice spectacle, to be sure!—"And the Lord said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. . ." "Let me see," reflected Mrs. Baines, trying to give her attention to her reading, "Judah represents the Church of England, and Israel is . . . Israel is . . . Baines! For goodness *sake* don't snore like that. You ought to be ashamed of yourself! *How* you can reconcile it with your conscience to guzzle like a pig every Sunday at dinner and then pass the rest of the afternoon snoring and snoozing instead of reading your Bible, *I* don't know."

Mr. Baines's bloodshot, greenish eyes regarded his wife with dazed wonderment for a few seconds. Then their red lids dropped and a gentle breathing announced the resumption of his slumbers. For a few moments Mrs. Baines really devoted her attention to the third chapter of Jeremiah; but when once more the respirations of her spouse degenerated into raucous snores, she lost all patience with him, and put away her Bible and pamphlets. She could not stop in the house any longer. It was allowable to visit the sick on the Sabbath day. She would go and see old Mrs. Gannell in Stebling's Cottages and read some tracts to her. So she shook off imaginary crumbs from her skirts, went upstairs to put on her Sunday bonnet, and left her husband — though he was unconscious of the privilege — to snore and chuckle and drivel and snore unrebuked for a couple of hours.

CHAPTER II

JOHN AND LUCY

JOHN and Lucy strode rapidly through the outskirts of the village, past the inspection of curious eyes from over the rim of window blinds, into the quiet country, which lay sleeping in veiled sunshine; for the warmth of the June sun had created a slight haze in the river valley and men and beasts seemed drowsy with the concentrated, undispersed odour of the newly-cut hay. They crossed a little stream by a wooden bridge, climbed two stiles — Lucy gaily, John bashfully, as if fearing that his new-born dignity of preacher might suffer thereby — walked about a quarter of a mile down a densely shaded lane where the high hedgerows were flecked with pale pink, yellow-stamened dogroses, and where the honeysuckle trailed its simple light green foliage and hung out its lank fists of yellow fingers: and then arrived at an open space and a broad high road. This they followed until they came to a white gate, marked in black letters "To Englefield. Private." Without hesitation, from long-established custom, they raised the latch and entered the dense shade of a well-timbered wood with a glimpse here and there, through the tree trunks, of open water.

Lucy sighed with relief and pleasure when the white gate swung to behind her and she was walking on a turf-covered track under the shade of great beech trees. Though the scene was familiar to her she exclaimed at its beauty. John mopped his face industriously, flapped away the flies, blew his nose, and wiped the

brim of his hat. "Yes, yes," he would reply, looking to see if his boots were very dusty or whether there were any grass seeds sticking to the skirts of his frock-coat. "Canterbury bells, is that what you call them? Yes, there seem to be lots this year. Here's a nice, clean trunk of a tree. Let's sit down and have our talk. . . ."

"Oh, not here, John. It's too midgy. We will go farther on to The View: there's a seat there."

So they followed the broad, turfy track which commenced to ascend the flank of a down. On the right hand the great trees rose higher and higher into the sky; on the left the ground sloped away to the level of the little lake with its swans and water-lilies; and the turf near at hand was dark blue and purple-green with the bugle in flower. In the ascending woodland there were tall ranks of red-mauve foxgloves. Here the owner of the park had placed an ample wooden seat for the delectation of all who loved landscape beauty.

John threw himself down with heavy abandonment on the grey planks. Had he been alone he would certainly have taken off his boots to ease his hot and compressed feet, but some instinct told him his betrothed might not think the action seemly. Lucy stood for a few moments gazing at the view over the Kennet valley and then sat down beside him.

"How dreadfully you perspire, my poor John," she said, looking at the wet red hand which clasped the rail of the seat.

"Yes. The least amount of walking makes me hot."

"Well, but how will you be able to stand Africa?"

"Oh, it's a different kind of heat there, I believe. Besides, you don't have to go about in a black coat, a waistcoat and a starched shirt; except perhaps at service time on Sundays."

"What a pity black clothes seem to be necessary to holiness!"—(then seeing a frown settling on his face)

"I wonder whether we shall see anything so beautiful as *this* out there?"

"As beautiful as what? Oh! The view. Well, I s'pose so. I believe there are some high mountains and plenty of forest near the place where I am to live."

"What is its name?"

"Hangodi, I think — something like that. Bayley says it means 'the Place of Firewood.'"

"Oh, *that* doesn't sound pretty at all: just as if there were nothing but dead sticks lying about. I hoped there would be plenty of palms and those things you see in the pictures of African travel books — with great broad leaves — plantains? Is it a village?"

"Hangodi? I believe so. I think the chief reason it has been chosen is its standing high up on a mountain and being near water."

"Oh, John," said Lucy after a minute's silence, "I *do* look forward to joining you in Africa. I've always wanted to travel, ever since I won a geography prize at school. Just think what wonderful things we shall see. Elephants and lions and tigers. Will there be tigers? Of *course* not. I ought to have remembered they're only found in India. But at any rate there will be beautifully spotted leopards, and lions roaring at night, and hippopotamuses in the rivers and antelopes on the plains. And ostriches? Do you think there will be any ostriches, John?"

"My dear, how do *I* know? Besides, we are not going out to Africa to look for ostriches and lions, Lucy," said John, rather solemnly. "We have a great work before us, a *great* work. There is a mighty harvest to be gathered for the Lord."

"Of course, John, of course," Lucy hastened to reply, "I know what is the real object of your mission, and I mean to help you all I can, don't I?" (pushing back a wisp of his lank brown hair that fell over his brow — for he had taken off the hot wide-awake).

"But that won't prevent me from liking to see wild beasts and other queer African things; and I don't see the harm in it, either. . . ."

"N—no, of course it isn't *wrong*. These things are among the wonderful works of the Almighty, and it is right that we should admire them in their proper place. At the same time they are apt to become a snare in leading us from the contemplation of holy things into vain disputes about science. I know more about these spiritual dangers than you do, Lucy," continued John, from the superior standing of his three years' education in London, "and I warn you against the idolatry of intellect" (squeezing her little kid-gloved hand to temper his solemnity with a lover's gesture). "I knew a very nice fellow in London once. He had studied medicine at the hospitals and he came to Bayswater College to qualify for the East African Mission; for he intended going out as a medical missionary. He was the son of a minister, too, and his father was much respected. But he was always spending his spare time at this new Natural History Museum, and he used to read Darwin and other infidel writers. Well, the result was that he took to questioning the accuracy of Genesis, and *of course* he had to give up all idea of joining the Mission. I don't know what became of him, but I expect he afterwards went to the bad. For my part, I am thankful to say I never was troubled with doubts. The Bible account of Creation is good enough for me, and so it ought to be for everybody else."

"John! *John!*" exclaimed Lucy, shaking his arm, "you are just as bad as your mother, who accuses me of disbelieving the Bible because I like to take a walk on a fine Sunday afternoon. How you *do* run on! I only said I wanted to see elephants and lions in Africa and you accuse me straight out of 'worshipping my intellect' or some such rubbish. Don't you know the

chief reason I promised to marry you was because I thought it was so noble of you to go to Africa to teach the poor natives? Very well, if you think African wild beasts will be a snare for my soul I won't run the temptation, and you shall marry some black woman whose ears will come down to her shoulders, and a ring through her nose as well, and no doubts at all about anything."

"Lucy! I think you're very flippant."

"John! I think you're much too sanctimonious! You're a great deal too good for me, and you'd better find a more serious person than I am — Miss Jamblin, for instance."

"Ann Jamblin? And a very nice girl too. Oh! you may sneer at her. She's not pretty, I daresay, but she comes to all the prayer meetings, so mother says; and she's got a nice gift for sacred poetry."

"Yes, *I* know her verses — flimsy things! Just hymns-and-water, *I* call them. She's got a number of stock rhymes and she rings the changes on them. Any one could do that. Besides, I've caught her lots of times borrowing whole lines from Hymns, Ancient and Modern, which I suppose aren't good enough for chapel people, so they must needs go and make up hymns of their own. And as to the prayer meetings, it's just the tea and cake that attract *her*. Bless you! I was at school with Ann Jamblin, and I know what a pig that girl is. . . . But if you think she'd suit you better as a wife, don't hesitate to change your mind. Your mother would be *delighted*. And I've heard say that Ann's uncle, who keeps the ham-and-beef shop in Reading, means to leave her all his money. You won't find Ann Jamblin caring much for wild beasts, *I* can promise you! Why, I remember once when the school was out walking near Reading and we met a dancing bear coming along with its keeper, she burst

out screaming and crying so loud that the youngest Miss Calthrop had to take her *straight* back."

"Now, *Lucy! Is* it kind to quarrel with me just before I am going away?" (Lucy's unexpected spitfire prettiness and the hint she might be willing to break off the engagement had roused John's latent manliness and he felt now he desired intensely to marry her.)

"My *dear* John, I wasn't *quarrelling,* I've nothing to quarrel about. I only suggested to you before it was too late to change your mind that Ann Jamblin would make you a more suitable wife than I should — there, there!" (fighting off a kiss and an attempt at a hug) "remember where we are and that any one might see us and carry the tale to your mother. Of course, I am partly in fun. I know it is unkind to tease you, but somehow I *can't* be as serious as you are. . . . Dear old John" (the attempt at a hug and the look of desire in John's eyes have somehow mollified her) "I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. . . . Did I? . . . I'm very sorry. . . . Just as you're going away, too. . . . There, never mind. . . . Look bright and happy. . . . Now *smile!*"

John's lips parted reluctantly and showed his pale gums and projecting eye-teeth.

"What do you think, John? . . . Let's get up and walk on to the garden gates, . . . what do you think my Uncle Pardew is going to give us as a wedding present? A harmonium! Won't that be nice? I shall take it out with me, and then when you teach the people to sing hymns — only you mustn't teach them Ann Jamblin's — I can play the accompaniments. And in the evenings when you are tired I shall try to play something that will soothe you. I have never tried the harmonium yet, but while you are away I mean to practise. It's just like playing the piano, only you have to keep working the pedals with your feet, like a

sewing-machine. Uncle Pardew would just as soon give us a piano, but I told him what you said about the climate being bad for them. So he settled that a harmonium would do better. I wonder what other wedding presents we shall get? I can tell to a certainty what your mother will give us."

"What?"

"Why, a very large Bible, bound in shiny brown leather like those in the waiting-rooms at railway stations, with a blue ribbon marker; and a dozen silver spoons. Six large and six small. I know she doesn't consider me worthy of the spoons, but she is bound by custom. When she was married *her* mother-in-law gave *her* spoons. . . . And your father will give us a dinner-service and a gross of Sparkling Cider . . ."

"I hope to goodness he doesn't. The cost of transporting it up-country would be quite beyond my means. I shall tell him . . ."

"And *my* father," continued Lucy, "is going to give me a gold watch and chain. And mother, my own sweet little mother — what do you think she's been working at, John?"

"Can't say, I'm sure."

"Why, *all* the house linen. . . . Sheets, pillow-cases, tablecloths, napkins, and such like. She has been getting them ready ever since I was first engaged. . . . John! You must be *very* kind to me in Africa."

"*Kind* to you? Why, of course! Do you suppose I should be anything else?"

"You don't know *how* I feel the idea of parting with mother. I love her better than any one in the world, better than you, John. She never says anything, but I know she is dreadfully unhappy at the idea of my going away so far and for so long. But then, I tell her, we can't *all* be old maids. Father isn't rich enough to keep us all at home, and I don't want to go on work-

ing at a National school all my life. . . . Oh, by the bye, talking of mother, I had something so pleasant to tell you. What do you think Lord Silchester has done? You know mother was maid to old Lady Silchester? Well, when father went the other day to see Mr. Parkins about a gate he met his lordship walking out of the agent's office. They got into conversation and father told him I was going out next year to marry you in Africa. And last Wednesday mother got a letter written by Lord Silchester himself, saying he had not forgotten her faithful care of his mother and would she give the enclosed to her daughter, out of which she might buy a wedding present, something to remember Lord Silchester by when she got out to Africa. And there were four five-pound notes in the envelope. Mother was *so* pleased she positively *cried.*"

"Yes. That was very kind of his lordship. I must tell my mother when I get back to-night. It may cheer her up."

"Oh, every one has been very nice about my engagement. The Miss Calthrops, where I was at school in Reading, told me they were working at some æsthetic mantel-borders for our house in Africa. . . ."

"Mantel-borders! Why, we shan't have any mantel-pieces!"

"No mantel-pieces? No fireplaces?"

"Only a fire for cooking, in the kitchen, and that will be outside."

"Oh well, then, we must put them to some other use; I couldn't wound their feelings by saying we didn't want them."

"Lucy, you mustn't imagine you are going to live in a mansion in Africa. Our home will be only a cottage built of bamboo and mud and tree-stems roughly trimmed, with a thatched or a corrugated-iron roof. I don't suppose it will contain more than four rooms —

a bedroom, a bathroom, a sitting-room, a store and an outside kitchen."

"Well, but even a log-hut might be made pretty inside, with some 'art' draperies and cushions and a few Japanese fans. I mean to make our home as pretty as possible. Shall we have a garden?"

"Oh, I daresay — a kitchen garden, certainly. For the Mission Committee wants to encourage the planting of vegetables and even some degree of farming, so that we may live as much as possible on local products. We are taking out spades and hoes and rakes in plenty, a small plough, an incubator, and any amount of useful seeds."

"I'm sure," said Lucy, still musing, "there ought to be lovely wild flowers in Africa and beautiful ferns, too. I mean to have a little wild garden of my own, and I shall press the flowers and send them to mother in my letters."

"I daresay you will be able to do that, when you have finished your household work and done your teaching in the school."

"Teaching in the school?"

"Why, of course you will help me in that. You'll have to take the girls' class, whilst I take the boys'."

"Oh, shall I? That's rather horrid. I didn't think I was going out to Africa to teach, just the same as at home. The National School children at Aldermaston are quite tiresome enough. What will little black girls be like, I wonder?"

"I'm told they're very quick at learning. . . . I am sorry," continued John, rather portentously, "that you don't quite seem to realize the nature of the duties you are about to undertake. I love you very dearly, Lucy"— and a tremor in his voice showed sincerity — "but that isn't the only reason I have asked you to come out to me in Africa and be my wife. I want a helpmeet, not a playmate; one who will aid me in

bringing these heathen to a knowledge of God's goodness; not an idle woman who only thinks of picking wild flowers and ornamenting her house. Don't pout, dear. I only want to save you disappointment. You are not coming out to a life of luxury, but one of hard work. Besides, it would be hardly fair to the Mission if you did not take certain duties on yourself, because when I am married they will increase my pay to two hundred and fifty pounds a year."

"What do you get when you are single?"

"One hundred and eighty. You see a married man gets extra pay because it is always supposed his wife will add her work to his. A married missionary, too, has more influence with the natives."

"All the same, John, we shall sometimes make time to steal away by ourselves and have a nice little picnic without any of those horrid black people near us. . . ."

"Horrid black people, Lucy, have immortal souls. . . ."

"I daresay, but that doesn't prevent their having black bodies and looking like monkeys. However, I daresay I shall get used to them. And if I don't at first . . . By the bye, John, I forgot to ask, but I wanted to, so as to relieve mother's mind — are they cannibals?"

"What, the people of Hangodi? I don't know, but I scarcely think so. And if they were, we should have all the more credit in converting them."

"Yes; but suppose they wouldn't wait to be converted, but ate you first?"

"The little I've read and heard shows me they would never do that. African cannibals, it seems, are rather careful whom they eat. Generally only their war captives or their old people. They wouldn't eat a peaceful stranger, a white man. However, on the east side of Africa the negroes are *not* cannibals, any more than we are."

"Isn't it curious, John, to think what different ideas of right and wrong prevail amongst the peoples of the world? Here, you say, there are some tribes in Africa which eat their own relations. Well, I daresay it is thought quite a right and proper thing to do — out there — just as we in England think the old folk ought to be cherished and taken care of, and kept alive as long as possible. Only fancy how funny it would sound to us to be told that Mr. Jones showed very bad feeling because he wouldn't join his brother and sister in eating up old Aunt Brown! And yet I daresay that is what cannibal scandal-mongers often say to one another. Isn't it wonderful how one lot of human beings can think and act so differently to another lot; and yet each party considers that nobody is right but those who believe as they do? Supposing one day some black missionaries landed in England, dressed in large earrings, bead necklaces, pocket handkerchiefs and nothing else, and tried to persuade us to worship some hideous idol and leave off wearing so many clothes. How astonished we would be . . . and yet they would think they were doing right, just as our missionaries do who go out to teach savages the Gospel. . . ."

"Well, I confess I don't see the resemblance. What *we* preach is the Truth, the Living Truth. What *they* believe is a lie of the Devil."

"Yes, but they don't *know* it is. They must think it is the truth or they wouldn't go on believing in it year after year. When I was teaching geography the other day, I was quite *astonished* to find in the Manual that about *four or five hundred millions* of people were Buddhists. Isn't it *dreadful* to think of their all being wrong, all living in vain. Surely God won't punish them for it hereafter?"

"It's hard to say. If they had the means of grace offered to them and rejected the Message I should think He would. But that is the chief object of our

Foreign Missions, to teach the heathen the true principles of Christianity and bring the Light of the Gospel to them that sit in darkness. When this has been done throughout the earth, no one will then be able to say he sinned in ignorance, 'because he knew not the way of Life.'"

"And yet, John, see here in England what different views of religion even good people take. Father goes to Church; you go to Chapel; and each thinks the other on the wrong road to Heaven."

"Oh no! Lucy, I wouldn't go so far as that. Of course, I believe that our Connection has been vouchsafed a special revelation of God's Will and Purpose among men. But all the same I feel sure that many a Church person comes into the way of Truth though it may be after much tribulation. Why, I wouldn't deny that even *Roman Catholics* may be saved, if they have led a godly life and acted up to their lights. At the same time, those who have the Truth among them and are wilfully blind to its teaching are incurring a heavy responsibility."

"Then you think father stands less chance of being saved than you do?"

"Well . . . yes . . . I do; because in his Church he does not possess the same means of grace as are given to our Connection."

"But he is so good, so kind to every one, so fair in his dealings . . ."

"Good works without faith are insufficient to save a man."

"Well, for my part, I can't believe that *any* one will be lost because he may not follow the most correct kind of religion. I can't believe that God will punish any one who isn't very, very wicked indeed. He is so great; we are so little. . . . Just think, supposing we saw an ant doing anything wrong, should we feel obliged to hurt it or burn it? Should we not be rather

amused and pitiful? And mustn't we seem the very tiniest of ants to God?"

"Ah, Lucy! The belief in the fierce judgments of the Almighty is a fundamental Truth of our religion, and if your faith in *that* is shaken, everything will begin to go. . . . But the subject is too solemn to be lightly discussed, so let's talk about something else. Have you finished my slippers?"

"Yes, and they're perfectly *lovely*. A dark blue, with J.B. embroidered in white silk. I shall bring them with me to the station to-morrow. . . . Why, here we are at the gates of the garden! *How* we've walked and *how* we've talked! And look, John,"—drawing him back from standing too near the iron gates, "there's his lordship on the terrace, and I do believe the young lady with him is the one he's become engaged to!"

John looked in the direction whither Lucy discreetly inclined her head, beyond triumphs of carpet-bedding to the terrace which fronted the south side of the great house. And there, foremost of several groups of Sunday callers who were taking tea at small tables, they saw specially prominent a party of three: a pretty girl rather showily dressed in the height of 1886 fashion, an old lady, and an elderly man, tall, a little inclined to stoop, dressed in dark, loose-fitting tweeds. He had a long face with a massive jaw and rather a big nose. But though they were not visible at a distance of fifty yards there were kindly wrinkles round his dark grey eyes as he suddenly lifted them from the seated ladies and glanced across the flower beds to see who was looking at him from the outer world.

This was Lord Silchester; and John, not wishing to prolong his indiscretion, raised his wide-awake and turned away with his betrothed. He and Lucy then walked directly to Aldermaston, John leaving her at the railway station, where he consummated his breach

of the Sabbath by taking an evening train back to Theale, and so returned to his home at the Aerated Waters factory for the last night he was ever to pass there.

The next morning, punctually at seven o'clock, Lucy's father drew up his gig before the booking-office of Theale station, and, getting a porter to hold the horse, helped Lucy down and accompanied her on to the station platform, where they found the Baines family already assembled: Mrs. Baines gloomily seated on a bench, Mr. Baines reading the old newspaper placards of the closed bookstall, and John busy seeing his numerous boxes labelled.

"Hullo, Baines! — and ma'am — hope you're well . . . a bit cast down, I expect? But there, it's a fine career he's starting on. . . . Still, it's always a wrench. John "— extending his hand —" I've just called in to wish you good luck *and* a prosperous voyage *and* a happy return, by and bye. Mind you make a comfortable home out there for my little girl! I shall be feeling about as bad as you feel, ma'am" (Mrs. Baines kept a perfectly impassive face during these attempts at sympathy and did not even look at the speaker), "next — when is it to be? March? — when I come to part with Lucy. But life's made up of partings and meetings, which is why, some'ow, I don't like railway stations. Now I can't stop, and if I could, I should only be in the way. Must be off to market. Leave you Lucy. She'll walk back to school. Good-bye, John. . . ."

And Farmer Josling hurried out of the station and his horse's hoofs sounded in quick succession on the ascent to the main road. Lucy, left behind, actually found herself regretting that father had brought her in such good time as to give her five-and-twenty minutes or more of irresolute attendance on John. When

she had presented him with the slippers, had squeezed his hand two or three times, and adjured him to write from the first stopping-place, besides sending a post-card from London to say he was leaving "all right"; had made a few suggestions about his luggage which, in spite of the urbanity of departure, were too futile to be answered or adopted; and had insisted on pushing the band of his blue tie under the shirt button at the back of his neck, so that it might not rise up over the collar: there seemed to be nothing left to say or do. The bookstall was not yet opened so there were no papers to be bought.

She would have talked with Mrs. Baines, who had retired to the little waiting-room and was pretending there to read a great roll of texts in big print hung against one of the walls. But at her first remark she noticed Mrs. Baines's eyelids were quivering and her under lip twitching in a way to indicate that she was a prey to almost uncontrollable emotion. Although she mechanically turned the leaves of the texts, her eyes were not focussing them, and something seemed to be moving up and down her lank throat which she could not finally swallow. She only answered Lucy's remark by an inarticulate gurgle and waved her away. There was something so pathetic in her dismal ugliness, in her awkwardly restrained emotion, that Lucy was suddenly moved to pity as she returned to the platform. Her embarrassment was cut short by the tumult occasioned by the approaching train, heralded by the clanging of the station bell. The train was full and John had hurriedly to pass all the second class compartments in review to find a place not only for himself but for the amorphous packages deemed too frail for the guard's van. When at last he had squeezed himself and his parcels past the obstructing knees of the established passengers, he had just time to twist round, stretch out over his surly neighbours' laps, and squeeze

Lucy's timorously extended hand. Then the train gave a lurch forward and a slide backwards which made him nearly bite his tongue off in an attempt to say good-bye to his parents, and finally rolled slowly out of the station, while the forms of father, mother, and sweetheart left standing on the platform grouped themselves for one moment in an attitude of mute farewell before the advance of the train cut them off from his sight.

The retreating chain of carriages shut itself up like a telescope, and the station began to resume its sleepy calm. Mrs. Baines's emotion now could no longer be restrained from expression. She tottered towards the waiting-room and sinking heavily on to a hard wooden seat she choked and hiccupped and sobbed, and the tears rolled regularly, one after the other, down her cavernous cheeks. Lucy took her trembling hands and tried to soothe her; and then, Mrs. Baines, softened by this sympathy, lost all that remained of her self-control and abandoned herself limply on Lucy's shoulder.

"Oh!" she gasped, "I've parted with him in anger — he's gone! . . . Perhaps I shall never see him again. . . . My boy. . . . My only son. I never said a kind word to him before he left. I thought there would be time. . . . I thought John would come and make it up. I was cross because he went out walking with you and came back late by train yesterday. You know I always taught him to observe the Sabbath. But I'd forgive him *anything* if he'd only come back and give me *one* kiss . . . my boy. . . ."

But John was well on his way to Reading, and the London express, and all his mother's tardy plaints were fruitless to recall him. Moreover, he was not perceptive. To him, his mother's demeanour had seemed much as usual; and he was certainly not conscious that she had parted with him in anger. He was fond of her in a way, but he had been used from childhood to her being always in a huff about something or other.

Lucy restored her future mother-in-law to partial calmness, straightened her bonnet, re-tied the bonnet strings, and walked a little of the way back with her towards Tilehurst, while Mr. Baines followed submissively behind. For the rest of that day he enjoyed unrebuked freedom to do as he liked. He ate his fill and even smoked a pipe in the parlour. His wife having regained her composure held aloof from him in silent, stony grief.

Lucy fortunately encountered the innkeeper of Aldermaston driving thither in a chaise and got a lift, nearly as far as her home, a substantial farmstead on the Mortimer road, close to both church and school. This enabled her to begin her duties punctually. She taught her girls and boys from nine to twelve and two to four. She thought of John with gentle melancholy during the day, and even shed a tear or two at night when she concentrated her mind on the scenes of her betrothed's departure, especially his mother's wild display of grief. But the next morning as she walked from the farmstead to the school she actually hummed a gay tune as she picked a spray of wild roses from the dewy hedge and arranged them round her light straw hat. At the same time she had a twinge of remorse at her forgetfulness — poor John was doubtless now at sea, watching England fade from the exile's view; and she forced herself to assume before her scholars an aspect of restrained grief.

Nevertheless, as day after day of summer weather went by in her surroundings of perfect beauty, she confessed to herself she had seldom felt so happy, in spite of her sweetheart's absence.

CHAPTER III

SIBYL AT SILCHESTER

THEY had ridden over from opposite directions — he from Farleigh Wallop on the downs south of Basingstoke, she from Aldermaston in the Kennet Valley: to meet on the site of the Roman Calleva Atrebatum, the modern Silchester. This was in the beginning of July, 1886. The Roman city of early Christian Britain was then — and now — only marked by two-thirds of an encircling wall of rough masonry, crowned with ivy and even trees. There were grassy hummocks concealing a forum, a basilica and a few houses. An occasional capital of a column or obvious blocks of ancient hewn stone, scattered here and there among the herbage, made it clear, apart from tradition, that the place of their rendezvous had a momentous past. But its present was of purely agricultural interest — waving fields of green wheat, sheep grazing on the enclosed mounds, an opulent farmstead — unless you were a landscape painter of the Birket Foster school: then you raved about the thatched cottages, the old church and its churchyard.

On this July morning Captain Roger Brentham and Sibyl Grayburn had the untilled portion of the site of Calleva Atrebatum quite to themselves. This, no doubt, was the reason why they had decided to meet there for an explanation which the man deemed to be due to him from the young woman. He, of course, arrived first, but Sibyl was not long in making her appearance from the direction of Silchester common. A groom who rode behind her at the sight of Captain

Brentham touched his hat and trotted away. . . . Brentham tied up the two horses in the shade of the Roman wall.

Sibyl disposed herself gracefully on a mound which covered the site of a Roman dwelling, arranged the long skirt of her riding habit so that the riding trousers and other suggestions of her limbs might not be too obvious to the male eye.

Roger was a captain in the Indian Army, about twenty-eight or twenty-nine, strongly built, tanned in complexion, supple in figure, good-looking, keen-eyed. Sibyl Grayburn was a decidedly pretty young woman of twenty-five, the daughter of Colonel Grayburn who had recently moved from Aldershot to Aldermaston and was trying to live the life of a gentleman farmer on rather slender means. The Brenthams and Grayburns of the younger generation were distant cousins.

Roger (seating himself on the mound not too near to Sibyl, and scanning her attentively): "Well, you're just as pretty as you were five years ago — a little filled out perhaps. . . . And *this* is how we meet. How *utterly* different from what I had been looking forward to! I remember when we said good-bye at Farleigh *how* you cried, and how for the first four years you scarcely missed a mail. . . . And you can't say *I* didn't write — when I got a chance. . . . Or that I didn't work like a nigger to get a position to afford to marry — and *now* I hear from Maud you're going to marry Silchester. To tell you the truth it didn't come as a complete shock. I saw hints of it in some beastly Society paper that some one posted to me at Aden — I suppose it was *you!* And this is what *women* call *fidelity!*"

Sibyl (at first keeps her eyes on the turf, but presently looks Brentham defiantly in the face): "If women of my own age were to discuss my case — not mere romantic school girls — they would say I had acted

with ordinary common sense, and *very* unselfishly. I am, as you know, twenty-five, and I'm sure you won't have enough to marry on for several years — I should never again get such a chance . . . and I really *do* like Lord Silchester, you don't know *how* kind he can be — and you can't *really* care so very much. You reached England a fortnight ago, and never even *wrote* to me. . . ."

Roger: "I was too much taken aback by that paragraph in the *World* . . . and Maud gave me a hint in the letter she sent to my club. Besides, I had to stop in London to see the Foreign Office and the India Office . . . and . . . and to attend a missionary meeting" (Sibyl ejaculates with scorn: "*Missionary* meeting!") "and get some clothes. . . . I had nothing fit to wear when I landed. . . ."

Sibyl: "Well, I'm not blaming you. I only meant that if you were so madly in love with me as you pretend you would have dashed down to get a sight of me before you went hobnobbing with your missionary friends . . . or bothered about clothes. I did not want my engagement to come to you as a shock, so I *did* post that *World* to you and got Gerry to address it — and I told Maud, so that she might prepare you. But *do* let's be calm and sensible and not waste time in needless reproaches. I *must* get back to lunch. We've got Aunt Christabel coming — she helped to bring it about, you know." (Roger interpolates "*Damn* her!") "She's got twice mother's determination. . . . Dear old Roger. . . . I *am* sorry . . . in a way . . . but you'll find *heaps* of girls, *much* nicer than I am, ready to jump at the prospect of marrying you." (Here Sibyl's eyes glanced with a little regret at his turned-away face, with the bronzed cheek, the firm profile and the upward twist of the dark moustache. "And you know our 'engagement' was only boy-and-girl fun. Besides, now I know more about things —

I was so young when you went away — I don't approve of cousins marrying. . . . Isn't their — I mean aren't their . . . children deaf and dumb or congenital idiots, or something unpleasant? . . ." (And here Sibyl, appropriately to the period in which she was living, blushed a deeper rose than the ride had given her at the audacity in alluding to children as the result of marriage.)

Roger: "Nonsense. Heaps of cousins marry and everything turns out all right if they come of healthy stock as we do. Besides, we're only second cousins. But of course this is nothing but an evasion. You thought you could do better for yourself by marrying an elderly peer, and so you threw me over. . . ."

Sibyl: "Well! I *did* think I might, and *not* selfishly. There's papa — more or less in a financial tangle over his farm. . . . There's mother, wearing herself ill, trying to make both ends meet . . . and Clara and Juliet to be brought out, and the boys to be educated and got into professions . . ." (crying a little or pretending to do so out of self-pity) ". . . I know I'm sacrificing myself for my family, but what would you have me do? I shall soon become an old maid, and you won't be able to marry for *ever* so long. . . ."

(Roger mutters: "I've five hundred a year and . . .")

Sibyl: "Yes, but what could we do on that? Poor papa could afford to give me nothing more than my trousseau. . . . Even on seven hundred a year, *if* you get a Consulate, we couldn't manage two households, and I'm perfectly certain I couldn't stand the African climate long, and I should have to come home. I *don't* like roughing it, I should *dislike* hot countries; and I *hate* black people. . . . No, Roger . . . dear . . . be sensible. . . . If you want to carve out a great career in Africa or India you don't want to be hampered with a wife for several years to come; and then . . . I'll —

I'll find some really *nice* girl to marry you, somebody with a little money. And Silchester might help you enormously. They'll probably take him into the new Government — aren't you glad that *horrid* old Gladstone's *gone*? — He'll be at the Colonial Office or somewhere like that and I know he'd do anything I asked him, once we were married. If you still want to go back to Africa he shall get you made a Consul or a Governor or whatever it is you want. . . ." But Roger was not going to listen to anything so cold-blooded, even though all the time an undercurrent of thought was glancing at the advantages that might accrue from Sibyl's *mariage de convenance.* He'd be *hanged* if he'd take anything from Lord Silchester. . . . He was entitled to some such appointment, anyway, after all he had done. But there, he had lost all interest in life and if he went to the bad, Sibyl would be to blame. All his interest in an African career had been bound up with Sibyl's sharing it. With her at his side he felt equal to anything. He would conquer all Equatorial Africa, strike at the Mahdi from the south, find Emin Pasha, lay all Equatoria at the feet of Queen Victoria, and in no time Sibyl would be Lady Brentham ——

"Yes," interjected Sibyl, "and lose my complexion and be old before my time, riding after you through the jungle, or living stupidly like a grass widow at home. . . ."

Yet as he jerked out his tirade rather theatrically she noted him with an approving eye. His anger and extravagance brought out a certain boyishness and made him, with the freedom of the jungle about him, still additionally attractive physically. . . . He certainly was good-looking and in the prime of manhood . . . she sighed . . . the remembrance of Lord Silchester's pale, somewhat flabby face, his slightly pedantic manner, his carefulness about his health. . . . He rode — yes — they had already had decorous rides to-

gether, but she imagined before the ride his cob had had some of the freshness taken out of him by the groom. . . .

Sibyl tried by broken phrases, and half-uttered hints, to convey the idea that Lord Silchester being nearly sixty — at any rate close on fifty-six — and not of robust health, might not live for ever; though really she wouldn't mind if *she* died first, men were so perfectly hateful, and so was your family — if you were a woman. You were expected to do all you could for your family, and abused into the bargain by others who held you bound by foolish promises made when you were a mere girl without any knowledge of the world. Still, there was a possibility — just a possibility — for weren't we all mortal? — that she might find herself a widow, a lonely widow some day. Roger by then would have made a great career, become a sort of Sir Samuel Baker; he'd have discovered and named lakes after royalty; then they might meet again; and who could say? Certainly, if it came to *love,* she wouldn't deny she had never felt *quite* the same towards any one as she had towards Roger. . . .

But Roger checked such philosophizings rudely, saying they were positively indecent: at which she expressed herself as very angry. Then leading out the horses in eye-flashing silence, Roger helped her to mount and swung himself into the saddle. He escorted her silently to Aldermaston main street, raised his hat, and rode off up the Mortimer road with a set face and angry eyes on the way back to Basingstoke.

He paused however at Tadley to give his father's cob — borrowed for the day — a feed and a rest. His ride lay through one of the loveliest parts of England in those days, before " Dora " had commandeered timber from the woods — to find afterwards she did not want it — before farmers had changed tiles or thatch on barns to corrugated iron, and chars-à-bancs, motor

cycles and side-cars with golden-haired flappers, school treats and bean feasts had made the country-side noisy, dangerous and paper-strewn.

Insensibly his mood softened as he rode. It was more than four years since he had been home. Though he had spent all of his youth in this country, save for school and military college, his eyes seemed never before to have taken in the charm of English landscapes. Here was England at its best in the early part of July: poppies blazing in the green corn and whitish green oats, hay still lingering — grey on green — in the fields, ox-eyed daisies fully out, wild roses still in bloom in the hedge-rows, blue crane's bill, blue vetch, and purple-blue campanulas in the copse borders. The plump and placid cows, with swinging udders, so different from the gaunt African cattle with a scarcely visible milk-supply, the splendid cart-horses, the sheep — neat and tidy after shearing — the cock pheasants running across the sun-and-shadow-flecked roads, the cawing rooks, and the cooing woodpigeons, the geese and donkeys on the commons. Here and there, off the main road, park gates of finely wrought iron with a trim geranium-decked lodge and a vista of some charming avenue towards an invisible great house; side turnings, half-overgrown with turf, leading to villages quaintly entitled. Some of the details his eye and ear and nose took in — such as the braying of barrel organs on the fringe of an unseen fair, on a rather burnt and blackened gipsy-befouled common; or the smell of pigsties in a hamlet, or placards in big print pasted round an ancient stump or on an old oak paling — it was irrational to call beautiful. But together they made up England at its best, with old churches packed with the history of England, the little towns so prosperous, the straggling villages, beautiful if insanitary, the sign-posts with their agreeable Anglo-Saxon and Norman names, so pleasing to the eye after years of untracked

wilderness; the postman trudging his round in red-and-black, the gamekeeper in velveteen, the hearty labourers in corduroy, blue-shirted, bare-armed and hairy chested. All this was England. "Was there a jollier country in the world?" (There was not, in 1886.)

And as to Sibyl. . . . How differently he saw her *now,* after four years! As pretty as paint, though rather overheated after a short ride; but *how* artificial! What a delusion to suppose such a woman would have cared for a rough life in Africa. Why she even spoke slightingly of India, a country of romance far exceeding Africa. Indeed, he had only turned to Africa and African problems because all the great careers to be made in India were seemingly over. . . . There was nothing to be done in India without powerful backing. . . .

Backing? It was perhaps silly to have flouted the suggestion of Lord Silchester's influence. . . . It was difficult unless you were related to permanent officials or members of Parliament to get a Consular commission in East Africa. Why not gradually — gradually of course — it wouldn't do to forgive her too quickly — become reconciled to Sibyl's marriage and pursue instead his second desire, a great African career? . . .

So it was a comparatively happy Roger Brentham who cantered up the road to the vicarage at Farleigh Wallop in the late afternoon of that day and sat with his sister Maud in the arbour enjoying a sound English tea. Maud, a pleasant-faced young woman of thirty, the only sister of three stalwart brothers, one a soldier, another a sailor and the third intending to be a barrister; housekeeper to her father, an absent-minded archæologist; could not be called pretty, because she was too much like a young man of twenty-five with almost a young man's flat figure, but she was in every way satisfactory as a sister. Her father was out on

some archæological ramble and she was glad of it because she thought Roger might have come to her with a heart to mend. No doubt he felt heart-broken over Sibyl's defection. She looked at him inquiringly while she poured out tea, but would not of course broach the subject.

"You've been out a long time with the cob. I hope you haven't over-ridden him? Where did you go?"

"To Silchester and back; but I baited him at Tadley and gave him an hour's rest in Basingstoke; and another hour at Silchester. I've jogged along very quietly, looking up old haunts — and — and I've seen Sibyl Grayburn. She told me all about her engagement."

"Sibyl? Then — you don't mind so much? I hardly knew how to break it to you. . . ."

"*Mind?* Oh, well, there *was* a boy-and-girl engagement, a flirtation between us before I went away, as you knew. But Africa drove all that out of my mind. Besides, how can I marry on five hundred a year? I dare say Sibyl has done well for herself, and she's getting on. Girls can't afford to wait and look about them like a man can. By the bye, old girl, why doesn't some one come along and marry *you?* I don't know a better sort of wife than *you'd* make. . . ."

Maud: "Thank you, Roger, I'm sure you mean it. But I don't suppose I shall ever marry. My line is to look after father for the rest of his life, and then become everybody's aunt. I'm really his curate, you know. And his clerk and his congregation, very often. Oh, I'm quite happy; don't pity me; I couldn't have nicer brothers . . . or perhaps a nicer life. I love Farleigh ——"

Roger (not noticing, man-like, the tiny, tiny sigh that accompanied this renunciation of marriage): "Jove! How jolly all this is: you're right. If I wasn't a man I should think like you. What could

one have better than this?" And he looked away from the arbour and the prettily furnished tea-table to the well-kept lawn with long shadows from the herbaceous border. Beyond that the wooded slopes of Farleigh Down and the distant meadows of the lowland, and then the sun-gilt roofs of Basingstoke's northern suburb, and the distant trains, three, four, five miles away with their trails of cotton-wool smoke indicating a busy world beyond the quietude of the vicarage garden. He could see the slight trace of a straight Roman road athwart the northern landscape, Winchester to Silchester; the downs of Hannington and Sydmonton and the far-off woods of Sherborne. When he was queer with sun-fever in Somaliland he would sometimes be tantalized by this view, like a mirage, instead of the brown-grey sun-scorched plains ringed by low ridges of table-topped mountains and dotted with scrubby acacias, whitened by the drought . . . and would pull himself together, sit upright in the saddle and wonder if he would ever see home again. And here he was. . . . Hang Sibyl! . . .

So when Sibyl Grayburn married Lord Silchester at the end of that July — because he was fifty-six and impatient to have some summer for his honeymoon before returning to take up the burden — a well-padded one — of office in the Conservative Government — Captain Roger Brentham was among the guests, the relations of the bride. And his best leopard skin, suitably mounted, was in Sibyl's boudoir at Englefield awaiting Lady Silchester's return from the Tyrol.

* * * * *

And in the winter of 1886, Captain Brentham received from Lord Wiltshire the offer of a Consulate on the East Coast of Africa and accepted it. It was provisionally styled the Consulate for the Mainland of Zangia where the Germans were already beginning to

take up the administration, but Brentham was instructed to reside at first at Unguja, the island immediately opposite the temporary German capital. The British Consul-General for the whole of Zangia had been recalled because of heated relations with Germany. Pending his return Captain Brentham was to act as Consul-General without, however, taking too much on himself, as Mr. Bennet Molyneux of the African Department rather acidly told him.

Molyneux, at the Foreign Office, was not at all pleased at Brentham's appointment: one of those things that Lord Wiltshire was wont to do without consulting the permanent officials. Molyneux had not long been in the new African Department (hitherto disparagingly connected with the Slave Trade section); and as Africa had barely entered world-politics, British Ministers of State showed themselves usually indifferent as to how the necessary appointments were filled up, adopting generally names suggested by Molyneux, so that he was accustomed to nominating his poor relations — he had a reserve of wastrel nephews and cousins — or the friends of his friends — such as Spencer Bazzard (q.v., as they say in Encyclopædias). If they were "rotters," the climate generally killed them off in a few months; if they made good, they established in time a claim on the Foreign Office regard and got transferred to Consular posts in South America, the Mediterranean, and Western Europe.

But Lord Wiltshire was not always asleep or uninformed, as he sometimes appeared to be. So his Private Secretary countered Bennet Molyneux's querulous Memo on Captain Brentham's lack of qualification for such a responsible East African post by reminding him that the gentleman in question was well versed in Arabic through having accompanied a Political Mission to the Persian Gulf, that he had served in Aden and Somaliland and had conducted an expedition to the

Snow Mountains of East Africa for the Intelligence Division, had contributed papers to the Royal Geographical Society, was a silver medallist of the Zoological Society, and was personally vouched for by a colleague of Lord Wiltshire's: all of which information for the African Department was summed up by the Private Secretary to Molyneux in a few words: "See here, Molly; take this and look pleasant. You can't have *all* the African appointments in your gift. You must leave a few to the Old Man. He generally knows what he's about." So Molyneux asked Brentham to dine with him and apparently made the best of a bad job . . . as he said with a grin to his colleague, Sir Mulberry Hawk.

CHAPTER IV

LUCY HESITATES

WHEN the school holidays supervened, Lucy spent her vacation quietly at Aldermaston working at her African outfit — material and mental — in a desultory way. She supposed she would have to leave in the following April to join her betrothed. April seemed a long while ahead. She had not even given notice to the school managers yet of her intention to give up teaching. It would not be necessary to do so or to brace her mind for the agony of separation from her home until John had announced that all was in readiness and she had received the formal intimation of his Missionary Society that they approved of her going out to join him and would make the necessary arrangements for a steamer passage.

Meantime she gave herself up to the delight of reading such books about African exploration or mission life in Africa as she could obtain from the Reading libraries. They served to strengthen her determination to keep faith with John; while other ties and loves were pulling the other way. She had in her veins that imaginational longing to see strange lands and travel which is such an English trait; yet this longing alternated with fits of absolute horror at her foolishness in having consented to such an engagement. Why could she not have recognized when she was well off? Could any one in her station of life have a more delightful home?

The farmstead stood on a slope about a hundred feet above the Kennet Valley. The river was a mile away,

though little subsidiary brooks and channels permeated the meadows in between, and in spring, summer and autumn produced miracles of loveliness in flower shows: purple loosestrife, magenta-coloured willow herb, mauve-tinted valerian, cream-coloured meadow-sweet, yellow flags, golden king-cups, yellow and white water-lilies, water-crowsfoot and flowering rush. Lucy was an unexpressed, undeveloped artist, with an exceptional appreciation (for a country girl) of the beauty in colour and form of flowers and herbage, of the velvety, blue-green, black-green cedars which rose above the wall of the Park and overshadowed the churchyard, of the superb elms, oaks, horse-chestnuts, ashes and hawthorns studding the grassy slopes between the house and the water meadows. She loved the rich crimson colour of the high old brick walls of the Park, and the same tint in the farm buildings, varied with scarlet and orange and the lemon and grey of lichen and weather-stain. The old farm-house in which she had been born and had passed all her twenty-four years of placid life, save when she was at boarding-school, seemed to her just perfect in its picturesque ancientry and its stored smells of preserved good things to eat and drink. Their garden was carelessly ordered, but from March to October had a wealth of flowers, the spicy odours of box borders, the pungent scent of lavender and rosemary, and the fragrance of sweet briar and honeysuckle.

She did not take much interest in the details of farming — a trifle of self-conceit made her think herself superior in her bookishness and feeble water-colour painting to her younger sisters, who were already experts in poultry-tending, butter-making, and bread-baking. But she accepted as a matter of course the delicious results (as we should think them now) of living at a well-furnished, well-managed farm: the milk and cream, the fresh butter and new-laid eggs,

the home-cured bacon, the occasional roast duck and chicken; the smell of the new-mown hay, the sight of ripe wheat or wheat neatly grouped in its golden sheaves in chessboard pattern; the September charms of the glinting stubble with its whirring coveys of partridges, its revived flower shows — scarlet and blue, bright yellow, dead white, lavender, russet, and mauve; the walnuts in the autumn from their own trees; the Spanish chestnuts from the Park; impromptu Christmas dances in the big barn; an occasional visit to a theatre or a magic-lantern-illustrated lecture in Reading. On one such occasion she saw for the first time Captain Roger Brentham, the explorer, who whilst staying with Lord and Lady Silchester gave a lecture on his recent travels and some wonderful snow mountain he had visited in East Africa. . . . Why should she seek to leave such surroundings? She could read and hear about all that was most interesting in the world without leaving her parents and her home. Yet, to disappoint poor John, who counted on her coming out to share his work — and if she threw him over she might never get another offer of marriage and grow stout and florid like Bessie Rayner, ten years older than she was, up at the Grange farm. . . .

But *was* marriage after all, with its children and illnesses and house drudgery, so *very* attractive to a dreamer? Might she not be happier if she passed all the rest of her life at Aldermaston, saving up her salary as a school-mistress against old age and a possible leaving of the farm if — ever so far ahead — dear father died? She had often thought, with a little encouragement she might *write* . . . write stories! . . . and she thrilled at the idea. But then, what experience had she of the world — the great world beyond southern Berkshire — which she could set down on paper?

So far, no one had proposed to her — even John

had hardly asked her definitely to marry him. He had always taken it for granted, since he was eighteen, that she would, and from that age herself she had tacitly accepted the position of his fiancée. Why had she acquiesced? There was a weakness of fibre about her and John's stronger will had impressed itself on her smiling compliance. Her mother had rather pursed her lips at the alliance, having her doubts as to John being good enough, and John's mother being even bearable as a mother-in-law. This faint opposition had made Lucy determined to persevere with the engagement. She had a distaste for a farmer type of husband; it seemed too earthy. And she wanted to travel. A missionary ought to make a refined spouse and be able to show her the strange places of the earth.

There were sides of John's character she did not like. She was not naturally pious. The easy-going Church of England and its decorous faith were good enough for her; she loved this world — the world of the Kennet Valley with genial, worldly Reading on one side and not-too-disreputable, racing Newbury on the other — too well to care overmuch for the Heavenly Home in which John was staking out claims; if she had known the word she would have called John priggish; instead, she said "sanctimonious." Yet withal she was conscious of a certain manliness, a determined purpose about him. . . .

Perhaps, however, in the summer months and the rich contentment of September the balance of her inclination might have been tilted against him, she might have nerved herself to writing that cruel letter which should say she shrank from joining him in Africa; were it not that he wrote faithfully from each stopping place, each crisis on his journey. His letters — closely written in a facile running hand on thin foreign paper — were stuffed with conventionally pious phrases, they contained diatribes on his ungodly fellow-

passengers who broke the Sabbath (with an added zest from his remonstrances), played cards for money, told shocking stories in the smoking-room, and conducted themselves on shore in a manner which he could not describe. But then he gave very good descriptions of Algiers, of Port Said, Suez and Aden, and made her wish to see these places with her own eyes, smell their strange smells, and eat their strange viands. His letter from Unguja announcing his arrival there in August finally decided Lucy to throw in her lot with John.

There was also the further incentive that African adventure — missionary and political — was again becoming fashionable and attracting attention. Stanley was starting to find Emin Pasha; others had embarked or threatened to embark on the same quest. More and more missionaries were going out. It was rumoured that Ann Jamblin had announced her intention to take up a missionary career. Lucy wrote a little anxiously to inquire. Ann admitted she had toyed with the idea as she believed herself capable of teaching and even of preaching to the savage. But if she did go it would probably be to West Africa where the climate was even more deadly than in the South and East, and such a sacrifice might be more acceptable before the Heavenly Throne than the comfortable and assured position of a missionary's wife, not expected to do more than make a home for her husband.

John's first Unguja letter said that Thomas, Bayley, Anderson and himself had been very kindly received there by the Commercial Agent to the East African Mission — commercial because from the first it had been decided that a reasonable degree of trade should go hand in hand with fervent propaganda and Brotherhood work. The Mission must strive to make itself self-supporting in the long run as it had no rich church

behind it. So there were to be lay agents who traded in the products of the country and whose stores would prove an additional attraction to the native visitor and inquirer. The Agent at their Unguja depôt — Mr. Callaway — had been a trader on the West Coast of Africa, agent there to a great distilling firm; who had become so shocked at the effects of cheap intoxicants on the native mind and morals that he had thrown up his employ and enlisted under the banner of a Trading Mission, pledged not to deal in alcohol or gunpowder. Mr. Callaway had " got religion " and " found Christ " (in Liverpool), but in spite of that — the naïve John wrote thus unthinkingly — was a very pleasant fellow who had soon picked up the native language and got on good terms with the Arabs of Unguja. The latter fully approved of his teetotalism — avoidance of alcohol being one of the few good points in their religion.

John described with unction the prayer meetings and services they held in Mr. Callaway's sheds and godowns on the shore of Unguja's port; though he had to admit that his fervour had been a little modified by the rancid smell of the copra [1] stored in these quarters and the appalling stench that arose from the filth on the beach. But there was plenty of good Christian fellowship at Unguja. The representatives of the great Anglican Mission established there — with a Cathedral and a Bishop and a thoroughly popish style of service — had shown themselves unexpectedly good fellows. One of them, Archdeacon Gravening, had presented the four young recruits for the East African Mission to the Arab sultan, and they had seen him review his Baluchi and Persian troops at the head of whom was an English ex-naval officer. Even the Fathers of the French Roman Catholic settlement had a certain elemental Christianity he had never thought to find in the followers of the Scarlet Woman. . . .

[1] Dried coco-nut pulp.

The great British Balozi or Consul-General who had been the unacknowledged ruler of Unguja had just left for home . . . rumour said because he could not get on with the aggressive Germans, who were obtaining a hold over the country. They had paid their respects instead to British authority in the person of a very uppish and sneering Vice-Consul — Mr. Spencer Bazzard . . . who had great doubts of the value of Christianity so far as the negro was concerned. Mr. Bazzard, however, was dead against the Germans and wanted as many British subjects as possible to enter the interior behind the German coast so as to "queer their pitch," if they attempted to put their "rotten protectorate," in force.

Unguja, John wrote, was a wonderfully interesting island, despite its horrible smells, its heat and mosquitoes, which never left you alone, day or night. Such a mixture of Arabs and Persians, Indian traders, fierce, long-haired Baluchis, plausible Goanese half-castes, Madagascar people, Japanese and Chinese, and negroes from all parts of Africa. . . . He had already had a touch of fever and Bayley had broken out in boils; Anderson had suffered from diarrhœa; but all three were overjoyed at the prospect of leaving, soon after this letter was posted, in an Arab "dhow" which would convey them and the porters of their expedition to Lingani on the mainland, whence they would start on a two weeks' journey up-country. They were taking with them Snider rifles and ammunition to defend their caravan against wild beasts on the road and also to shoot game for the caravan's meat supply. At Mr. Callaway's advice they had been practising with these rifles at the shooting butts of the Sultan's army for the past week. . . . Thomas had been told off for Taita. . . .

Then ensued a long silence and Lucy, now thoroughly interested, was getting anxious. But in Jan-

uary came a letter of many pages headed "Hangodi, Ulunga, November, 1886." John wrote that he and his companions had encountered many difficulties. On the fortnight's march inland from Lingani their porters had several times run away in alarm, hearing that a bloodthirsty tribe called "Wahumba" were on the march, or that there was famine ahead. The German traders on the coast had not been friendly, and the attitude of the Arab chiefs in the coast-belt was surly. However, one of these Arabs, Ali bin Ferhani, was a kindlier man than the others and had told off some of his slaves (John feared they were, but what could you do?) to carry their loads to the Ulunga country. They also had with them a Christian convert, a native of Ulunga and a released slave (Josiah Briggs) who could speak English to some extent and was very use ful as an interpreter and head man. . . . Well, they had reached Hangodi at last and liked its surroundings. There were mountains — quite high ones — all round. Hangodi, itself, was over three thousand feet above sea level and quite cool at nights. Indeed John now regretted he had spurned the idea of mantel-borders, for they had fireplaces in the dwelling-houses, both those already built and those they were planning. A fire at night, in fact, was often welcome and cheerful. The Chief approved of the settlement, wanted them to teach his people, and keep off the "Wa-dachi," as he called the Germans, whom he did not seem to like. But the Chief's people, the Wa-lunga, were suspicious and quarrelsome, and as he could not speak their language and had to explain the Gospel through an interpreter, they paid him little attention. The elders of the tribe liked to come and talk with him in his verandah, that is to say, *they* did the talking — punctuated by a good deal of snuff-taking and spitting; and he gleaned what he could of its sense from the summaries given to him by Josiah Briggs. It seemed to consist

of many questions as to how the white men became so rich and why he could not teach this method to their young people. If he tried to expound Sacred things to them they asked in return for a cough medicine or to be shown how to make gunpowder and caps, and how to cure a sick cow. Yet he felt sure their minds would be pierced ere long by a gleam of Gospel light. . . .

There were also some Muhammadan traders from the Coast settled for a time with the Chief, who, he strongly suspected, was selling them slaves, war-captives. Though the Chief seemed willing to listen to their story of the Redeemer, he nevertheless sent out his "young men," his warriors, on raiding expeditions against the tribes to the south, and they sometimes returned from such forays with cattle, with men cruelly tied with bush-rope and their necks fastened to heavy forked sticks, and with weeping young women whom they took as wives. . . . The Wangwana, as these black "Arabs" were called, were very hostile to his mission — more so sometimes than the real Arabs. Occasionally he had met a white-skinned Arab who reminded him most strongly of the Bible patriarchs, and who seemed very desirous of being on friendly terms with the white man. But these black Arabs who spoke Swahili, the language of Unguja, though they affected outward politeness, were working hard against the good influence of the East African Mission and trying to persuade the Chief to reconsider his first grant of land and expel the white people who were spies in the service of the great Balozi and the English men-of-war, watching to intercept slave dhows. . . .

The children of the Wa-lunga were frightened of him and his two companions and could not be induced, even by gifts of beads, to sit on their knees. But their mothers, on the other hand, worried the white men incessantly for beads and calico, soap and salt, which

last they ate as though it was a sweetmeat. Yet they ran away when he sent for the interpreter and tried to tell them about God. One woman had shouted back at him that it was very wicked to talk about God; it would only draw down the lightning . . . much better leave God alone and then He left you alone — this at least was how Josiah had translated her speech.

He could not see any idols about the place. He fancied the people worshipped the spirits of the departed, which they believed to dwell in large hollow trees. They were also terribly afraid of witchcraft. . . .

Hangodi was, however, rather a pretty district, and Lucy would be pleased with the site the Mission had chosen. Bayley, who had some knowledge of surveying, made out its altitude above sea-level to be 3,500 feet, more or less. There was a clear stream of water running through a gorge below the Mission enclosure — for they had constructed a rough hedge. A few wild date palms might be seen in the stream valley and there were plenty of pretty ferns and wild flowers.

As to lions; they could be heard roaring every night in the open country, but hitherto he had not actually seen one. Then with a few devout phrases and others expressive of his longing for her to join him the letter came to a conclusion.

During all this time Lucy saw little of the Baines family. But a few days after she had read this letter from Hangodi, Mr. Baines called on Lucy at the school — it was at the beginning of February — and put into her hands a copy of *Light to Them that Sit in Darkness.* "There's a letter in here of John's which they've printed," said Mr. Baines with considerable exultation, "and mother thought you might like to read it. Mind you return the magazine to her when you've done so.

Good-bye. S'pose you are starting in a couple of months?"

Lucy found a column scored at the side with pencil, where the following matter appeared:

BLESSED NEWS FROM EAST AFRICA

We have received the following intelligence from Brother John Baines, who has recently joined the East African Mission:

HANGODI, NGURU,
November 20, 1886.

MY DEAR MR. THOMPSON,—

We arrived here about a month ago, after a pleasant stay with the brethren at Unguja. We reached Hangodi in about two weeks of travel from the port of Lingani, accompanied by Brothers Anderson and Bayley, and were greeted most warmly on arrival by Brothers Boley and Batworth — the "busy B.'s," as they are called — who feared from the rumours afloat that we should be stopped by native disturbances on the road. We brought with us from Unguja Josiah Briggs, a convert, who was originally a freed slave from this very district of Hangodi. He has lived for five years at our depôt in Unguja or at the Presbyterian Mission station at Dombasi. He will be able to assist me materially as interpreter among the Wa-lunga as Kagulu is his native tongue.

The journey from Lingani to Hangodi was rather a fatiguing one as the donkeys we took with us to ride either fell sick — poisoned by some herb, or strayed and were eaten by lions. So we ended by having to walk. Our Unguja porters ran away before we had got far inland, scared by rumours of Wahumba raids or stories of the famine raging in the interior; but a kindly Arab, who is supposed to have known Dr. Livingstone, came to our assistance and sent a large number of his people to convey us and our loads to Ulunga, as this district is called (the root — *lunga* — means the "good" or the "beautiful" country, as indeed it will be, when it has received the Blessed Gospel).

Mr. Goulburn, who is pioneering and is "spying out the land" to the north, travelled with us as far as Gonja and then quitted us, after we had prayed together in my tent. We turned south and continued our journey to the Ulunga mountains with the Arab's porters and guided by Josiah Briggs.

The country became very hilly, and as it was the beginning of the rainy season we had occasional violent thunder-storms

and the streams were difficult to cross. Fortunately, however, the early arrival of the rains kept us from attacks on the part of the terrible roving tribes of Masai or "Wahumba," who only seem to exist to raid and ravage their agricultural neighbours, but who don't like doing so in wet weather. Moreover, they appreciate the springing up of the new green grass after the drought and prefer taking their cattle — whom they worship — out to graze. This new grass attracts to the district incredible herds of antelopes and zebras and gives the lions and leopards such abundance of food and occupation that they never deemed it worth their while to attack our caravan, though during the dry season — the Arabs told us — you could hardly get through the plains without losing a proportion of your carriers from lions, leopards or hyenas. This early breaking of the rainy season therefore seemed to us an act of special intervention on the part of Divine Providence to ensure our safe arrival at our destination. When we reached Hangodi we were hospitably received by the Chief Mbogo, to whom Brother Batworth introduced us. Mbogo rules over the district of Ulunga. He rejoiced greatly that we had come to teach the Gospel and asked me many questions about the Christian faith. An earnest spirit of inquiry prevails amongst all his people, who are flocking to see us and who listen with rapt attention to my simple exhortations delivered through the medium of Josiah. The Arab traders at this place are very annoyed that an English missionary should settle here and expose their wicked traffic in slaves, but I hope to be able to frustrate their intrigues and induce the Chief to expel them. For that reason I am working hard at the language with Josiah and with the vocabularies I have obtained from Mr. Goulburn and Mr. Boley.

Many of the women in this place are eager to hear the blessed tidings and bring their little ones with them while they listen spell-bound to our teaching. I trust soon to have beside me one whose sweet duty it will be to lead these poor sinful creatures into the way of Truth and Life. . . .

The building of the houses, school and chapel was commenced, as you know, two years ago by Brothers Boley and Batworth, whom we relieved, and who are going to Taita to perform similar work for Mr. Goulburn. In completing the station we shall be our own architects, but Mr. Callaway has sent us up two Swahili masons and a Goanese carpenter from Unguja. Anderson is already doing a brisk business at our improvised store.

And now, dear Mr. Thompson, I remain in all Christian love,

Yours sincerely,

JOHN BAINES.

CHAPTER V

ROGER'S DISMISSAL

"SO it is really settled, Roger, that you are to go out to that African place with the violent name — something about 'gouging' I know," said Lady Silchester, one evening in the winter-spring of 1887.

She believed she was *enceinte* and treated herself — and was being treated — with the utmost consideration. Lord Silchester was transfused with delight at the possibility of having a direct heir and promised himself the delicious revenge of taunting those officious friends and advisers who had taxed him with folly in marrying a woman thirty years younger than himself. So she was lying on a couch in the magnificent drawing-room of 6a Carlton House Terrace, clad in some anticipation of the tea-gown. It was nine o'clock in the evening, and Roger Brentham had been summoned to dine alone with her and her husband and talk over his personal affairs. Lord Silchester would presently leave for the House of Lords; meantime he was half listening to their conversation, half absorbed in a volume of Cascionovo's *Neapolitan Society in the Eighteenth Century* in its French edition.

Roger, with one eye and one ear on Lord Silchester, replied: "Yes. Lord Wiltshire has definitely offered me the appointment — through Tarrington, of course — his Private Secretary; and equally definitely I've accepted it. But technically it's not Unguja, nothing so big. Unguja is an Agency and Consulate-General and is still held by Sir James Eccles, who is only at home on leave of absence. My post is a Consulate for the mainland, for the part the German company is

taking over. It is styled ' for the mainland of Zangia with residence at the port of Medina.' It is supposed the Germans are going to style their new protectorate ' Zangia,' the old classical name of the Persians for that part of East Africa."

Sibyl Silchester yawned slightly and concealed the yawn with her fan of Somali ostrich plumes which Roger had given her. Lord Silchester put down his book and turned suddenly towards Roger.

" How do you get on at the F.O.? "

" Oh, pretty well, sir," replied Roger, who still kept up his military manners with older men in higher positions than his own. " Pretty well. I've been working in the African Department all the autumn and I think I've got the hang of things; I mean, how to conduct a Consulate and the sort of policy we are to observe in East Africa. I've been down in Kent, also, staying with Sir James Eccles and being indoctrinated by him with the aims and ambitions he has been pursuing ever since 1866. He's a grand man! I hope they send him back. I should be proud to serve under him. Of course, I saw something of him at Unguja in '85–'86 . . ."

" H'm, well, I've no business to express an opinion, but I much doubt whether Wiltshire *will* send him back — Wiltshire sets much value on good terms with Germany, and Eccles is hated by the Germans. . . ."

Roger: " I know. . . . They've told me I must try to maintain friendly relations with our Teutonic friends, especially as I am to be, when the Consul-General returns, ' on my own,' so to speak, in the German sphere of influence. Meantime I am to live at Unguja and ' act ' for the Consul-General till he or some one else comes out. Awfully good of you, sir, to get this chance for me . . . it's rare good luck to be going out to act straight away for a man like Eccles. . . . I'll try my utmost to do you credit."

Silchester: "I don't doubt you will. But don't rely too much on my personal influence. I'm only Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster . . . a minister without portfolio, so to speak. Cultivate the friendship of the permanent officials. Once you're in — I mean once a Secretary of State has given you the appointment, *they* are the people who count. I remember when I was in diplomacy there was rather an uppish young fellow from the 11th Hussars who'd been somebody's A.D.C. in the Abyssinian War. Dizzy, to oblige 'somebody,' shoved him into the Slave Trade Commission. He took himself and his duties seriously and really *did* go for the American slave-traders. An Under Secretary hauled him over the coals for *trop de zèle.* Lord Knowsley supported him. The Under Secretary sent for him afterwards and said, 'Remember this, Bellamy; Lord Knowsley is not *always* here. WE ARE.' And sure enough after Knowsley left they found out something against him and 'outed' him from the service. Moral: always keep in with the permanent officials and you'll never fall out with the Secretary of State. Do you get on all right with 'Lamps'?"

Roger: "Sir Mulberry? I scarcely ever see him. He's much too big a pot to take an interest in me. Besides, he's keenest about the Niger just now. No, I have mostly to do with Bennet Molyneux, who is head of the Department; and I'm afraid I don't care overmuch for him. I like awfully the clerks in the Department except that they don't take Africa very seriously, think it all a joke, a joke bordering rather on boredom. Still, they're some of the jolliest fellows I know. It's Molyneux I can't hit it off with, and they say in the Department it's because I've come in between some poor relation, some cousin of his he wants to push on out there. He got him appointed a Vice-Consul a year or two back and thought he was going to be asked

to act for Eccles whilst he was on leave. And now that Lord Wiltshire has said *I* am to — I don't doubt at your suggestion, sir — Molyneux has turned quite acid. Especially when he had to draft my instructions! I think also he didn't like my setting him right when I first came to work in the office. He wrote some minutes about the Slave Trade and about the Germans which were the uttermost rubbish you ever read, and he never forgave me for not backing him up at a departmental committee they held — Sir Mulberry presided. And the mere fact that Thrumball and Landsdell have been awfully kind to me and had me to dine with them seems to have soured him. And when one day Lord Wiltshire sent for me to answer some questions — Well, I thought afterwards Molyneux would have burst with spleen. He threw official reserve to the winds and walked up and down in his big room raving —'*I've* been in this office since 1869,' he said, 'and I don't believe Lord Wiltshire knows me by sight. Yet he's ready to send for the veriest outsider if he thinks he can get any information out of him. The Office is going to the dogs — and so on. . . .'"

Lord Silchester: "Molyneux, Bennet Molyneux. I know him. Not a bad fellow in some respects, but a bad enemy to make. He is a kind of cousin of Feenix's — Colonial Office, you know. Well, your fate is in your own hands . . . you must walk warily . . ." (at this a servant enters and informs his lordship that the carriage is waiting) "I must be off. Sibyl! you *won't* stay up late? Roger, don't talk to her for more than an hour. Good-bye. Of course, you'll come and see us before you actually sail? . . ." (goes out).

A pause.

Sibyl: "You may smoke now; but only a cigarette, not a cigar." (Roger lights a cigarette.)

Sibyl: "What dear old Francis said was very good

advice. Mind you follow it. Get on the right side of these old permanencies. Whenever Francis begins his instances and illustrations I feel what a perfect book of reminiscences he will some day write. But, of course, it wouldn't do till he's reached an age when he can no longer serve in the Government. . . . I want him some day to be at the Foreign Office or at least the India Office. I do so love the pomp of those positions, the great parties in the season, the entertaining of delightful creatures from the East with jewelled turbans. . . ."

Roger (a little abruptly): "Are you happy. . . .?"

Sibyl (turning her head and looking at him intently): "*Happy?* Why, *of course. Perfectly* happy. Everything has gone splendidly. And now that I'm going to have a child. . . . I do hope it'll be a boy. Francis would be so happy. You quite realize if he has no heir the peerage and all the entailed estates go away to some perfectly horrid second cousin out in Australia. . . ."

Roger: "In view of that possibility I wonder he did not marry years ago, when he was a young man. . . ."

Sibyl: "My dear! How *could* he? He was a younger son and in the diplomatic service with barely enough to live on, respectably. And then he got tangled up with another man's wife. He thinks I know nothing about that side of him, but as a matter of fact I know everything. His elder brother, the fifth Lord Silchester, was an awfully bad lot — treated his wife very badly — they were separated and their only son was brought up by his mother to be dreadfully goody-goody. Francis's elder brother died in Paris — I daresay you have heard or read where and how. It was one of the closing scandals of the Second Empire. But then the goody-goody son married after he succeeded — married a sister of Lord Towcester. She was killed in the hunting field and her rather limp

husband died of grief afterwards, or of consumption, and Francis came into the title rather unexpectedly five years ago. Then he was embarrassed by his Darby and Joan attachment to Mrs. Bolsover.— However, then *she* died — and so — at last he felt free to marry. . . .

"I met him first at a croquet party at Aldermaston Park. I saw *at once* he was struck with me. . . . However, we won't go over the old argument again which we talked out that day at Silchester. . . . D'you remember? My ankles were so bitten by harvest-bugs after sitting on those mounds, *I* shan't forget! . . ." (meditates). . . . "I'm much happier than if I had married you. . . . My dear, that would *never* have done. . . . But that need not prevent our being the *best* of friends, the most attached of cousins. . . . It's a bore having a confinement in the Jubilee year. . . . I'd meant to rival Suzanne Feenix in my entertainments. . . . But if I give Silchester a boy, he will refuse me *nothing*. . . . And I mean, as soon as I'm up and about again, to push him on. He's rich — those Staffordshire mines and potteries. He's got *lots* of ability, but he's too fond of leisure and isn't quite ambitious enough. Complains of being tired. . . . He's only 57 . . . but he much prefers spending the evening at home and reading history and memoirs. Still, if Lord Wiltshire gets overworked at the Foreign Office, Francis simply *must* succeed him. He knows everything about foreign policy from A to Z, after serving so many years in Vienna and Rome. . . . Well, dear old boy, this is *really* good-bye. Make good out there, and don't make a fool of yourself with some grass widow going out, or some fair missionaryess. . . . I suppose some of them *are* fit to look at? . . . Play up to the permanencies, and try to write some dispatch that'll interest Lord Wiltshire. Then Silchester may get a chance of putting his oar in and

have you shifted to a better post and a more healthy one. After that *I'll* take a hand and marry you to some nice girl with a little money. . . . I wonder whether you'll feel lonely out there? But men never are, so long as they can move about and get some shooting . . . which reminds me I want a *lot* more leopard skins. Don't mount them: I like to choose my own colours ——"

(Enter Lady Silchester's maid.)

Maid: "My lady, before his lordship went out he said I was to remind your ladyship about going to bed early, so I ventured . . ."

"Quite right, Sophie. . . . I'll come up in one minute." (Exit maid,) "By the bye, Roger, I ought to ask after the other cousins. How's Maud?" (Roger intimates that good old Maud's all right.) "Maud is an excellent creature; I've always said so, though in a sort of tight-lipped way she's never approved of me. Because she's lost her own complexion in field sports and parish work Maud suspects all other young women of powdering and painting. And Geoffrey?"

"Geoffrey's ship is coming back in May and then he ought to get some leave; and to save your time, I might mention that Maurice will probably be called to the bar in the autumn if he satisfies the Benchers; and as to father, he's more gone over to Rome than ever. . . ."

"You mean Silchester?"

"Yes. The vicar there is as frantic a 'Romanist' as he is, and together they've had a rare old quarrel with the farmer who grows corn where you got the harvest-bug bites, and objects to excavations. I think father forgets at times he's a nineteenth century Christian. . . . He is awfully annoyed at the general opinion that Silchester only dates from Christian times in Britain and that the Temple to Venus is really a Christian church. That's what comes from a Classical

education. . . . Now I shall get into a row with your spouse for keeping you up. Besides. You don't *really* care for the others. . . ."

Sibyl: "To be frank, I don't. You were the only one that interested me. . . . I . . . well, then, Roger, this is the last good-bye but one . . ." (extends her hand on which he imprints a kiss). "That's quite enough show of affection; Sophie might come back at any moment and forget we are cousins. By the bye, it might be wise if you got some one — I dare say Francis would — to introduce you to the Feenixes before you go. They might serve to mitigate the hostility of Bennet Molyneux. Only don't fall in love with Suzanne and desert *me!* She's got the Colonies, it's true, but I'm going to have the Foreign Office before you're back. . . . You mark my words! Ta-ta! Coming, Sophie."

CHAPTER VI

THE VOYAGE OUT

LUCY said to herself she had never felt so miserable in her life as she did during the first night on board the *Jeddah,* the British India Co.'s steamer that was taking her to East Africa. She occupied one of the upper berths in the cabins off the Ladies' Saloon, in which there were, as far as she could reckon, five or six other occupants, including the stewardess, who passed her time alternately snoring on a mattress in a coign off the main entrance and waiting on such of the ladies as were sea-sick.

The *Jeddah* was rolling about in a choppy sea off the Downs. Lucy felt a horrible sensation of nausea creep over her at times, and she clenched her teeth to repress her inclination to vomit; for she was too shy to call upon the much-occupied stewardess for assistance. The back of her head throbbed with pain, her eyes were burning hot with unshed tears, and her poor throat ached with suppressed sobs. Far worse than the physical discomfort of sea-sickness was the intensity of her mental agony, the bitterness of her unavailing regrets. She lay motionless in her narrow bunk, gazing up at the ceiling which seemed almost to rest on her face, and turned over in her memory ceaselessly and with minute detail the events of the last three days: her farewell to home and "darling" Aldermaston; her parting with mother on the platform at Reading . . . and father . . . the flying journey to London, when she had almost forgotten her grief in the excitement of seeing the metropolis; her two days'

stay with Aunt Pardew, who with her husband kept Pardew's Family Hotel in Great Ormond Street. Then: the sight-seeing, the shopping, the visit to the offices of the East African Mission. Here she had received her saloon passage ticket in the *Jeddah,* and twenty pounds in bright sovereigns for her out-of-pocket expenses by the way. The Secretary had spoken to her so kindly and earnestly that she had felt ashamed of her indifference to the real work of converting black people.

The Secretary, however, had said one thing that somehow perturbed her. He had mentioned that a sweet-natured young woman from her neighbourhood — Sister Jamblin — might also be going to their Mission in East Africa — by the next boat. He thought this would cheer Lucy up; instead of which it annoyed her greatly. . . . Then came the early rising on what seemed like her execution morning; the hasty breakfast, interrupted with trickling tears and nose-blowing on Aunt Pardew's — Aunt Ellen's — part, as well as hers. . . . Aunt Ellen was so like darling mother — and yet — it *wasn't* mother — . . .

And the long rattle through dirty and dirtier streets in a four-wheel cab with the rest of her luggage on top. The arrival on board the steamer in the docks, where everything was noisy, hurried, and confused with preparations for departure. . . . Only this morning! Only some twelve hours since she had taken leave with despairing hugs of Aunt Ellen! Why, it seemed at least a month ago. And only three days since she had seen her mother! . . .

When she mentally uttered the word "mother," she lost control over herself and gave vent to a convulsive choking sob. . . .

"Would you oblige me," exclaimed a peevish voice from the berth below, "by calling for the stewardess to bring you a basin if you have any inclination to be sick?

It would be much better than trying to keep it back and making those disagreeable clicking noises in your throat. Excuse me for remarking it, but it is really *most* distressing, and it fidgets me so I can hardly get to sleep. You really suffer *much* more by endeavouring to repress sea-sickness than by giving way *at once* and having it over. . . ." This the speaker added because she had just given way herself — eruptively — and was now resting from her labours. Lucy was so startled and overawed by this unexpected interruption to her thoughts that she made no answer; but lay quite silent with flushing cheeks and beating heart. "It must be the tall, thin lady," she thought to herself, "I didn't remember she was so close."

Then her thoughts turned to her fellow-passengers. As far as she had ascertained, there were only nine besides herself: five ladies, two Roman Catholic priests or missionaries, and two men, one of whom was a Captain Brentham going out to Unguja, where he was to be Consul.

So, at least, she had heard the pink-cheeked lady say, rather tossing her head when she said it. Her aunt had timidly accosted two of the ladies before leaving the steamer. She had asked them with a redundancy of polite phrases to take Lucy under their protection as far as they might be travelling together. One of them was tall and thin, with a large bony face and cold grey eyes — a little suggestive of Mrs. Baines (Lucy thought); the other was pretty, though the expression of her face, even when she smiled and showed all her white teeth, was somehow rather insincere. But she had the most lovely complexion Lucy had ever seen. It was perfect: very pink in the middle of the cheeks and the palest blush tint over the rest of the face and neck. Her eyes were a dark blueish grey, with very black rims, and her hair a rich golden brown. Lucy was so much fascinated by her appearance and stared

at her with such unconscious persistence while her aunt was talking, that at last the pink-cheeked lady encountered her steady gaze with a look of haughty surprise which caused Lucy to lower her eyes.

Neither lady responded very cordially to Mrs. Pardew's deferential request. The tall thin one had said she was only going as far as Algiers, but asked if Lucy was " a Church person " because the East African Mission, she had heard, was run by Methodists. The pretty lady, whose attire Lucy was again scanning with attention, because it was in the latest fashion, had looked at her with rather more interest and said: " Going out to marry a missionary? Well, I can't say I envy your experiences. It must be a wretched life up-country, from all I hear. We shall travel together as far as Unguja, but I can't offer to act as your chaperon. It is very likely my husband may marry you when you get there. I mean —" (seeing Lucy's look of dismay) —" he is the ' marriage ' officer there at present, unless Captain Brentham is to deprive him of *that* privilege, also "— (here she had given a bitter laugh). . . . " If you feel lonely at any time on the voyage you may come and chat with me . . . occasionally; though I can't tell you very much about Africa as I have never been there before."

Slowly the night wore away. Lucy as she lay awake stifled her regrets by vowing that when the steamer called at Plymouth she would instantly leave it and return home to her parents, and write to John telling him she was not fitted to be a missionary's wife. He would soon get over his disappointment as Ann Jamblin was going out by the next steamer. *She* would marry him like a shot. . . .

In the small hours of the morning the sea calmed down and the ship rolled less. The passenger who had suffered most from sea-sickness — a poor tired-looking

woman, mother of too many children — ceased to retch and groan and sank into exhausted repose. Even Lucy at last wove her troubled thoughts into dreams, but just as she had dreamt that *this* was only a dream and that in reality she was embracing her mother in a transport of happiness, she awoke with tears wet on her face and saw the cabin lit up with garish daylight streaming through the now open skylight. A fresh, exhilarating breeze was sweeping through the stuffy saloon and chasing the nasty odour of sea-sickness. She sat up in her bunk and gazed blankly round, trying to realize the difference between dreamland and reality.

"Would ye like a bath, Miss?" said the stewardess, a coarse-looking but kind-hearted Irishwoman, never quite free from a suspicion of spirit drinking: "Would ye like a bath? Becase if so, ye'd betther follow Mrs. Bazzard."

"I — I — don't know . . . well, yes, I think I will," replied Lucy, wondering who Mrs. Bazzard was . . . didn't the name come into John's letters? Just then the door leading out of the saloon towards the bathroom opened and presumably Mrs. Bazzard entered the Ladies' quarters, carrying towels and robed in a white lace-trimmed *peignoir,* and with her hair roughly piled on the top of her head and a lank fringe parted to either side. "Why, it must be the lady with the beautiful complexion," Lucy was saying to herself, when she saw on nearer approach that the rosy cheeks and blush tints had disappeared, and that the incomer, though otherwise resembling her acquaintance of yesterday, yet had a pale face, colourless and sad. "Poor thing!" thought Lucy, "*how* she must have suffered last night." And so great was her compassion that it overcame her shyness, and she was about to condole with the lady, when Mrs. Bazzard swept by her abruptly without recognition.

When her toilet was finished, she felt ill-at-ease

among the uncongenial inmates of the Ladies' Saloon, and they directed towards her at times a look of hatred as at one who was prying into the mysteries of their clothing and bedizenment; so acting on the advice of the stewardess "to get up a bit of appetite," she staggered along the corridor and climbed the slippery brass-bound stairway till she reached the upper-deck. Here she sank on to the nearest seat and derived her first pleasurable sensation on board the steamer from inhaling the sea-scented breeze in the sunshine of April. It was indeed a fine morning, one of the first emphatic days of spring. The sky was a pale azure in the zenith and along the northern horizon a thin film of pinkish mist veiled the distant line of coast. A man cleaning the brasswork told Lucy they were passing the Isle of Wight; yonder was Bournemouth and presently she would see Portland Bill looming up.

A tall man, smoking a cheroot, was gazing in the direction of Portland Bill. Presently he turned round in Lucy's direction, looked at her rather hard, then began pacing the deck. "That," she reflected, "must be Captain Brentham, who lectured at Reading on that snow mountain. . . . *How* extraordinary! And he must be the man Mrs. . . . Mrs. . . . Bazzard said was to marry me to John when I arrived." She raised her eyes and they met his. On his next turn in walking the deck he paused irresolute, then raising his cap said: "Are you the young lady from my part of the country who is going out to Unguja to be married? The Captain told me about you — unless I have made some mistake and ought to be addressing another lady."

"I think it must be me," said Lucy. "I . . . I've heard you lecture once at Reading. You're a friend of Lord Silchester's, aren't you? My father is one of his tenants. We live at Aldermaston." Her voice

trembled a little in pronouncing the name of the place she now loved — too late — beyond any other.

"Aldermaston — *of course* I know it, known it from boyhood. I rode over there several times last year to see my cousins, the Grayburns. One of them married Lord Silchester last July, and that's why I stayed at Englefield and gave the Reading lecture. . . . So you came and heard it?"

"I did; because, as I was going out to marry a missionary, I thought I ought to learn something about East Africa. Your . . . your lecture made me want to go — awfully. . . . That wonderful mountain, those clumps of palms, the river and the hippopotami — or was it a lake?"

"Well, you'll see lots of such things if you are going up-country. Whom are you going to marry and where is he stationed?"

"Mr. John Baines, the East African Mission, Ulunga. . . ."

"Oh" (rather depreciatively), "Nonconformist, Plymouth Brethren, or something of the kind. Now I think of it I went to a big meeting of theirs last year soon as I came back. Yes, *I* remember. They're a trading and industrial mission some distance inland, in the British as well as the German sphere . . . good sort of folk, though their mouths are full of texts . . . but they took me in once when I was half dead with fever and nursed me back to health. And I liked the way they set to work to make the best of the country and the people. . . . But it will be awfully rough for you; you don't look cut out for what they have to go through. I should have thought the Anglican Mission more your style, if, indeed, you went out as a Missionary at all."

He wished to add, "You're much too pretty," but restrained himself. Just then the breakfast gong

sounded and they went down to the Dining Saloon. Brentham rather masterfully strode to near the top of the long table as though knowing he was the most important person on board, and placed himself next but one to the Captain's seat and Lucy on his right, with a wink at the same time to the Chief Steward as though to say "Fix this arrangement."

A moment after another lady with gold hair and a dazzling complexion glided up and nimbly took the seat on Brentham's left hand. The Captain was absent and intimated that they needn't expect him till the *Jeddah* was away from Plymouth and out of the Channel. The other lady passengers were breakfasting in the Ladies' Saloon. As soon as they were seated and porridge was being offered, the lady on Brentham's left introduced herself as the wife of a colleague: "My husband is Spencer Bazzard, the Vice-Consul at Unguja — I dare say you've heard about him at the F.O.? He's a friend of that dear Bennet Molyneux's, to whom we're both *devoted*. . . . *Such* a grasp of African affairs, don't you think so? My husband already knows Unguja through and through. I'm sure he'll be glad to put you up to the ropes. I've never been there before. Spencer thought he ought to go out first and make a home for me, so I've been a forlorn grass widow for over a year. However, we shall soon be reunited. And I understand we're to look on you as our chief till the Consul-General returns. Spencer's been Sir James's right-hand man. Thank you. Toast, please. No, I won't take butter: it looks so odd. Like honey! Ugh!"

After breakfast, Brentham escorted Lucy to the upper-deck, got her a folding chair and secured it in a sheltered corner, made her comfortable, lent her a novel and a rug, and then resumed his pacing of the deck or occasional study of a language book — he was

trying, he told Lucy, to master Swahili by doing Steere's exercises in that harmonious tongue. Mrs. Bazzard commandeered a steward and a deck-chair and established herself close to Lucy with a piece of showy embroidery, bought at Liberty's with half the embroidery done. In a condescending manner she set herself to pump Lucy about Brentham. . . . Did she know him well? Didn't she think him good-looking? Mrs. Bazzard thought of the two her husband was the finer-looking man. He had longer moustaches and they were a golden brown, like Mrs. Bazzard's hair; he wasn't perhaps *quite* so tall; but *how* she was looking forward to reunion with him. He was a paragon of husbands, one of the Norfolk Bazzards. His elder brother, a person of great legal acumen, had from time to time tendered advice of signal value to Mr. Bennet Molyneux. . . . It was thus they had got " in " with the Foreign Office, and if Mrs. Bazzard were not pledged to inviolable secrecy (because of Spencer's career) there were things she knew and things she could tell about Lord Wiltshire's intentions regarding Africa — and Spencer. . . . However. . . . Did Miss — she begged pardon — she had not caught Lucy's name. . . . Josselin? any connexion of Sir Martin Josselin? Oh, *Josling*. . . . Did Miss Josling come from Captain Brentham's part of the country? Not a relation? No, of course not. . . . Well, did she think him clever? Some — in the Foreign Office — regarded him as *superficial*. It was his good looks that had got him on, and the friendship of a great lady . . . but then *what* scandal-mongers *men* were! And *how* jealous of one another! Mrs. Bazzard's husband had got *his* commission through sheer, outstanding ability, yet at the time people said the most *horrid* things, both of him and her. . . . But Lord Wiltshire had remained unshaken, knowing Spencer's value; and undoubtedly held him in view for a very important

post in Africa as soon as he should have inducted Captain Brentham into his duties.

Lunch came in due course and was eaten in better appetite by most of the passengers. It was served with coarse plenty, on a lower-middle-class standard of selection and cuisine.

It was a sunny afternoon when the *Jeddah* anchored in Plymouth harbour. The passengers were informed they might spend four hours on shore, so Captain Brentham proposed to Lucy and to Mrs. Bazzard that he should take them under his escort and give them their last chance of eating a decent dinner at an English hotel. Mrs. Bazzard accepted with a gush of thanks and a determination to commence a discreet flirtation with the acting Consul-General, who was undoubtedly a handsome man. Lucy assented simply to the proposition. She was still a little dazed in the dawn of her new life. But as she went off with the others in the tug she put aside as an unreasonable absurdity any idea of flight to the railway station and a return home. It was a great stay to her home-sickness that there should be on board some one she knew who almost shared her home country, who had actually met people she had met, and who would carry this home knowledge out with him to the same region in Africa as that she was going to. This removed the sting of her regret and remedied her sense of utter friendlessness in the wilds. Was he not actually to be *her* Consul?

These reflections caused her to sit down in the Hotel Writing Room, whilst dinner was being got ready, and Mrs. Bazzard was titivating, and dash off a hasty letter to "dearest mother" informing her of the brighter outlook. Her mother, overjoyed at this silver lining to the cloud of bereavement, spread the news; and so it reached Englefield, where Lord Silchester was spending the Easter recess. He retailed it to Sibyl . . . who stamped her foot on the library car-

pet and said: "*There! Didn't* I predict it? I *said* he'd fall in love with a missionaryess!"

"And why not, my love?" replied Lord Silchester. "What if he does?"

A little tossing on the Bay of Biscay sent Mrs. Bazzard to her cabin, and made more scanty the public attendance at meals. But Lucy proved as good a sailor as Brentham, and a great solace to him. For he had his unacknowledged home-sickness too. You could not spend nine months in the best of English country life and the most interesting aspects of London without a revulsion of feeling when you found yourself cut off from all communication with those scenes of beauty, splendour and absolute comfort, and before high ambition had been once more aroused, and the unexplored wilderness had again beckoned her future ravisher. Lucy might be merely a farmer's daughter, a little better educated than such usually were at that period, still an unsophisticated country chit (as Mrs. Bazzard had already summed her up to the tall thin lady); yet she could talk with some slight knowledge about the Silchesters — her mother had been maid to Lord Silchester's mother, and her father was Lord Silchester's tenant. Colonel Grayburn was — or tried to be — a gentleman farmer within a mile of Lucy's home; she had seen Sibyl occasionally during the three years in which the Grayburns had lived in Aldermaston parish. Lucy had never been so far afield as Farleigh Wallop, but she knew Reading, Mortimer, Silchester, Tadley, and even Basingstoke. Merely to mention names like these consoled them both as the steamer ploughed her twelve knots an hour through the "roaring forties."

And when the *Jeddah* turned into the Mediterranean, with a passing view of the Rock of Gibraltar, and entered upon calm seas, blue and dazzling, their *camaraderie* increased under Mrs. Bazzard's baleful

gaze and interchange of eyebrow-raisings with the thin bony-nosed lady of Lucy's cabin.

The *Jeddah* anchored off Algiers. The thin lady, who here passes out of the story — I think she was the wife of a British Chaplain — had invited Mrs. Bazzard to lunch with her on shore. Mrs. Bazzard had hastened to accept the invitation, the more willingly since Captain Brentham seemed to have forgotten her existence; except at meal times, when he was obliged to pass the mustard and the sugar. Brentham and Lucy went off together into the picturesque white city, rising high into the half-circle of the hills. They lunched at the Café des Anglais and dined at an hotel near the quay. They climbed the ladder-like streets of the Arab quarter, bought useless trifles, and had a drive out into the country which was gay with genista in full bloom, with red-purple irises and roses, and dignified by its hoary olives, sombre cypresses and rigid palms.

If Lucy had never been so miserable as she was nine days previously, she had probably never felt so happy as now. Certainly she had never looked so pretty. Her violet eyes had a depth of colour new to them; her brown hair a lustre and a tendency to curl in the little strands and wisps that escaped control about her forehead. Her cheeks, ordinarily pale, and her milk-white complexion generally were suffused with a wild rose flush and a warmth of tint caused by the quickened circulation. The sea air and the sunshine chased away the languor that had accompanied a sedentary life. She had not been unobservant, and had taken several hints in costume from Mrs. Bazzard's dress. She had tightened this, expanded that, cut short skirts that might have flopped, diminished a bustle, inserted a frill, and adapted herself to the warmth of the tropics without losing grace of outline or donning headgear of repellent aspect.

At Port Said he already called her "Lucy," and she saw nothing in it that she mightn't accept, a permissible brotherliness due to country associations and the position of guardian, protector that he had assumed. He showed her those sights of Port Said that need not shock a modest girl. They sat side by side to enjoy the thrill with which the unsophisticated then passed through the Suez Canal. One woman passenger had left the ship at Port Said; another at Suez. There only remained the third one — the mother of many babies — changing at Aden into a Bombay boat — besides Mrs. Bazzard and herself in the Ladies' Saloon. The two missionary priests told their breviaries, gave at times a pleasant smile to her pretty face, and concerned themselves no more with her affairs than if she had been an uncriticizable member of the crew. They were Belgians going out for a life's work to Tanganyika, and to them the Protestant English and their ways were unaccountable by ordinary human standards. The captain of the ship had known Captain Brentham in the Persian Gulf and had the utmost confidence in his uprightness. What more reasonable to suppose than that this girl had been placed under his charge, inasmuch as it was he who would be the official to register her marriage when she met her missionary betrothed at Unguja?

Nor had Brentham any but the most honourable intentions. He felt tenderly and pitifully towards Lucy, carrying her country prettiness and innocency into savage Africa, embarking on a life of unexpected frightfulness, unspeakable weariness, of monotony, varied by shocks of terror, by sights of bloodshed and obscenity that might thrill or titillate a strong man, but must inevitably take the bloom off a woman's mind. He even thought, once or twice, of dissuading her from completing the contract, yet shrank from the upset this would entail. Perhaps she really liked this mis-

sionary chap? From the description she gave he didn't seem so bad — he was tall and strong and seemingly a man of his hands, with a turn for carpentry, and was the Agent of a very practical Mission. If she recoiled from this marriage, what was she going to do? It was impossible to think of her remaining at Unguja "on her own," and if he sent her back to England at his own expense her parents might resent very strongly his interference. There was his own career to be thought of . . . and Sibyl. . . . To a woman like Lucy a marriage with most men of her class, or below it, or immediately above it, would come with rather a shock. She was so marriageable, so marked out as a man's prey that she was bound to go through it some day. Then, when she was married, she would live more or less in his Consular district, and he could keep an eye on her without being unduly attentive. Perhaps Mrs. Ewart Stott was still settled in the Zigula country of the German sphere . . . *she* might help her. Very likely she would be able to stick her three years of residence which the Mission generally stipulated for and then return to England.— What a lark if they both went home together and compared experiences?

He might have revolutionized East African affairs in that space of time. . . .

He was quite unconscious that in the two-to-three weeks of their close association on board he had won Lucy's love to such an extent that she was growing slowly to look upon the end of the voyage and the meeting with John as a point of blackness, the entrance to a dark tunnel. . . .

Meantime, without assuming a forwardness of demeanour which her upbringing discountenanced and the watchfulness of Mrs. Bazzard forbade, she accepted all he gave her voluntarily of his society. The Red Sea was kind to them at the end of April: clear

cobalt skies, purple waves, a cool breeze against them, no steamy mist in the atmosphere, and occasional views of gaunt mountains or bird-whitened rocks and islands. They sat in their chairs and talked: talked of everything that came into Lucy's mind. She put to his superior wisdom a hundred enigmas to answer, which her mind was now able to formulate with an aroused imagination.

"You say you approve of missionaries, yet you seem to dislike religion; you tried to get out of attending the Sunday service in the Saloon, and you looked very angry when the Captain asked you to read the Lessons. Don't you believe in *anything* then?"

"You'll find, Lucy"— Brentham would reply — "that the word 'believe' is very much abused. You may 'think' of such and such a thing as probable, as possible, as desirable — often, indeed, the wish is father to the thought. But to imagine it, is not to believe in it; in the same way in which we are compelled by irresistible conviction to believe in some fact or consequence or event, whether we like it or not. We can only 'believe' what can be tested by the evidence of our senses, by some incontestable piling up of evidence or record of historical facts. . . . Beyond that there are probabilities and possibilities and suppositions. I can believe the fire would burn my finger if I put it in the flame; or that the earth goes round the sun and that the moon is more or less 240,000 miles away from the earth: because my senses or my reason convince me of the truth of these facts. I can believe that you're a very dear little girl seated next me in a deck-chair on a steamer going out to East Africa: because I can put such a belief to some conclusive test of the senses. But I can't in the same way 'believe' in most of what are called 'religious truths,' because they are only suppositions, guesses, tentative explanations which have lost their value . . . indeed, have lost their in-

terest. I can't therefore waste my time on such ——"

"But," Lucy stammered, "the Bible?"

"Just so: the Bible. How many of you stop to think what the Bible is? A collection of comparatively ancient writings in Hebrew and in Greek, very beautifully translated into Shakespeare's English, with lots of gaps filled up by suggested words and even — as we now think — lots of words and phrases wrongly translated. The Hebrew books may have first been written down at any time between six hundred and one hundred years B. C.; and the New Testament between fifty and a hundred-and-fifty years after Christ — at any rate in the form in which we know them. The original texts were uttered or written by men who only knew a small part of the Mediterranean world, who thought the earth was flat and the rest of the Universe only an arched dome over the earth. Job may have had grander conceptions, but the early Christian writers were ignorance embodied. They were ready to believe anything and everything to be a miracle, and to invent the most preposterous fairy stories to account for commonplace facts. At the same time they often overlooked the beauty and simplicity and practical value of Christ's teaching and also the fact that a good many of his . . ."

"*What* an abstruse conversation," said Mrs. Bazzard, breaking in out of the star-lit darkness on Roger's disquisitions. She hung about them in the Red Sea, especially after dark, and had a tiresome way of suddenly making her presence known. Perhaps, however, it was just as well, and, indeed, though Roger was annoyed at the moment at having his eloquent thinking aloud interrupted — because in such monologues we are generally trying to convince ourselves as well as our auditory — he also felt some relief at the excuse for dropping the argument. *Why* on *earth* should he undermine Lucy's stereotyped beliefs? What could

he give her — in the life she was going to lead, too — in place of them?

But the discussion was revived ever and again by Lucy's persistent questions. She elicited from him in general that although he approved of the material results of missionary work and the ethics generally of Christianity, he mocked at creeds, thought prayer futile — especially the fossilized prayers of Judaism, Protestant and Catholic Christianity, because they were inapposite to our present age, bore little relation to our complicated sorrows and needs, our new crimes, difficulties, agonies, and temptations. He found the Psalms, all but two or three, utterly wearisome in their tedious woes and wailings, aches and pains probably due to too carnivorous a dietary; untempting in their ideals —" more bullocks for the altar . . . and the fat of rams. . . ." Then our hymns — all but three or four — were gross or childish in their imagery, abject in their attitude to a Cæsar or a Sultan of a God, who all the time watched inflexibly the Martyrdom of Man and the ruthless processes of Nature without lifting a finger to stay the cyclone or the epidemic . . . and so on. . . . His views were very much modelled on those of Winwood Reade and on Burton's gibes at " Provvy " (Lucy shuddered at the irreverence and expected a meteor to cleave the ship in two), and he had brought out with him from England Cotter Morrison's " *Service of Man.*"

Lucy sometimes felt so shocked at his negations that she resolved to speak with him no more, but to apply herself to the study of the Swahili Grammar he had lent her. Then at the sight of him and at his morning greeting and the kindly companionship at meals, she could not remain aloof. At any rate, he had said that you ought to *act* as a Christian even if you could not swallow Christian theology. That was a great admission. And he seemed to have numerous friends

among the missionaries at Unguja and in the interior, which would hardly be the case if he were a bad man. . . . Besides, his father was a clergyman.

Aden came as a welcome surcease to these discussions. It was concrete and indisputable, and of remarkable interest when interpreted by a Brentham. . . . Steamer Point with its crowds of Indian and British soldiers, Jews with ringlets and tall caps selling ostrich plumes, Somalis like Greek gods in ebony offering strange skins, skulls, and horns for sale, and ostrich eggs; the drive — in a jingling carriage over sandy roads, past red-black crags on one side, with an intensely ultramarine sea on the other — to the Arab town; the vast cisterns, the rich vegetation at the cisterns; and then, after an interval of absolutely sterile rock-gorges (vaguely suggestive of the approach to Aladdin's cave in the *Arabian Nights*), a sea-side ravine with an unexpected flora of aloes, euphorbias, mesembryanths, and acacias. . . . Even Mrs. Bazzard, with her Bayswater mind, was momentarily impressed by Brentham's pleasantly imparted knowledge of all these things. You never noticed how extraordinary they were until he pointed it out. She was for the time being conciliated by his having invited her to accompany Lucy on the day's excursion and by the generous way in which he stood treat and presented her, as well as Lucy, with ostrich feather fans and amusing gewgaws made from sea-shells.

After Aden the sky clouded; metaphorically, with the coming end of this wonderful episode in Lucy's life, materially with some tiresome manifestations of the monsoon. I forget whether it blew behind and left the *Jeddah* wallowing in the trough of great indigo waves and rolling drearily; or blew against her progress, causing her to progress like a rocking-horse. But it imparted a storminess, a sense of exasperated emotion to this pair of lovers — as they were, unadmittedly.

Fortunately, it also made the footing of Mrs. Bazzard's high-heeled Bayswater shoes uncertain on the unstable deck, so she relaxed her watchful spying on their conversations. Lucy was alternately silent and wistful, and almost noisily vivacious, with hands that shook as they passed a tea-cup. She had begun to realize that in five or six more days the voyage would end in her meeting John as an ardent bridegroom; that she would never belong to Roger, she would pass out of his life as swiftly as she had entered it, be at most a pleasant and amusing memory of a half-ignorant little person with whom he had spent good-naturedly much of his time on a long sea voyage.

Roger, on his part, in smoking-room reflections, would feel he had gone much too far — compromised her, perhaps, played a rather foolish part himself, for a man with high ambitions. There was that bitch of a woman, that quintessence of a Bayswater boarding-house, Mrs. Bazzard, wife of a — rotter, probably — whose nose he had put out of joint. She was capable — and to conciliate her and win her over would be degrading — of putting any construction on his flirtation. How, at such times, before turning in, or even while playing whist in the Captain's cabin and thinking of anything but the game, he would *curse* these long steamer voyages and these episodes of love! There was that voyage out in 1880 — he had narrowly missed a breach of promise action then, and he would be hanged if he'd set out to be more than sociable. And the last time he had returned to England. . . . Mrs. Traquhair, the wife of the chief electrician at Unguja. . . . Only the fact that in the Mediterranean she had developed one of those Rose Boils which were a legacy of Unguja's mosquitoes, and which confined her to her cabin till the Bay of Biscay (when they were all sea-sick), had prevented the irrevocable. And all the time he believed himself engaged to Sibyl! And after-

wards, when he had met Mrs. Traquhair and her sister — *and* the sister! Oh my God,— in London and had dined them at the "Cri." and taken them to see Arthur Roberts from a box, and had scanned Mrs. T.'s profile as he had never done before and watched her laugh at the comedian, showing all the gold in her teeth . . . he asked himself *how on earth* he could have kissed her so passionately as they were passing through the Suez Canal. Yet she couldn't have been a bad sort because she had never attempted to bother him or follow it up. . . . But he couldn't class Lucy with Mrs. Traquhair or the siren of the 1880 voyage. She was utterly good and innocent of schemes to entrap him. A sweet little thing. . . .

As they passed into the Indian Ocean between Guardafui and Sokotra, there was a temporary lull in the wind. It was a moonlight night; they were sitting side by side under the open sky, for the deck-awning had been removed on account of the monsoon. A sudden fierce longing — there was no one on deck that he could see — seized him to take her in his arms and kiss her. And there came a telepathic message that she was aching to be so taken and kissed. But he resisted the impetus, with clenched hands on the arms of his chair. Silence had set in between them. A catch of Lucy's breath was faintly audible, and — dare I say it? A snivel, a tiny snivel. . . .

"*Lucy? Crying?* My *dear* child! Why . . . cheer up. We shall soon be there. . . . You're not cold?"

"You don't understand. . . . I . . . I . . . don't *want* to get there. . . . I don't want to marry him; I *hate* the very idea. . . ."

"Oh, but this will never do. . . . This is foolishness, believe me. Lucy! Pull yourself together."

Lucy now sobbed frantically.

Mrs. Bazzard was heard saying from quite close by,

"Which is Gyuardifwee and which is what-you-may-call-'em — Ras Hafoon? I mean, the cape where some of the steamers run ashore in the mist, and then you have to walk through Somaliland and get sunstroke?"

Brentham exclaimed under his breath: "*Damn* that woman!" and audibly, even a little insolently replied: "I'm *blessed* if I know. You'd better ask the Captain. He's on the bridge and dying for a gossip, and he'll probably give you a cup of cocoa."

Mrs. Bazzard walked away — or pretended to do so.

"Lucy dear. I want to speak to you while that cat has gone out of ear-shot. Calm yourself and listen, because I must speak in a low tone. If you feel you would sooner die than go through with this marriage, you shan't be forced into it. I will speak to Archdeacon Gravening . . . or the Bishop . . . and they will know of some nice women of the Anglican Mission who would take you in for a few weeks . . . till there is a return steamer. . . . Then on the plea of 'health' you can go back to England. I could easily advance the money for the steamer passage . . . some day your parents could repay me. But even if they didn't, it doesn't matter. I do so want you to be *happy*. . . . I blame myself awfully for the silly things I've said to you . . . about religion . . . it may have made you dislike mission work. . . ."

But Lucy sobbed out "It hadn't . . . that she was a little fool and he mustn't take any notice . . . she'd never, *never* behave like this again . . . after his extraordinary kindness too, which she would always be grateful for. He mustn't think any more about it or ever refer to it again. . . ."

And before he could say anything more, or that cat, Mrs. Bazzard, return, she slipped down to her cabin, where fortunately she was alone and could cry her fill without attracting attention. But as she lay on the

bunk, she set her teeth and resolved, come what may, she would *not* put thousands of miles between her and . . . "Roger" . . . she mentally uttered the name. Better to live within a few hundred miles of where he was and sometimes see and hear him. Why . . . *Why* . . . did he not ask her to marry him? Yes, and ruin his career. What would they all say at Unguja . . . and *John?* . . . Poor John! what a shock it would be to him. There was the note he had sent to greet her at Aden, to the address of the steamer agent. She had opened it, but not read it through, so infatuated was she with Brentham just then. . . .

The next morning Lucy breakfasted in the Ladies' Saloon, pleading sea-sickness. Later on, she went to the upper-deck, but armed herself with the Swahili Grammar, a defence against a Brentham who purposely stayed away, talking with the Captain, and none against Mrs. Bazzard, who pestered her with inquiries as to her "headache," expressing the quotation marks in her tone.

Relations however became more normal all round the day after that. In two more days they had anchored off Lamu. Lucy saw two low islands, with hazy forest country on the distant mainland. Lamu island had low sandhills projecting into the sea, and on one of them was an obelisk or pillar which Captain Brentham said was an important historical monument erected by the Portuguese nearly four hundred years before. The two women were eager to land and see East Africa for the first time. They went ashore with him in the Vice-Consul's boat; for there was a Vice-Consul here who had been expecting Brentham's visit and was delighted to find two English ladies invading his solitude. They saw, when they landed, masses of vague masonry, the remains of Portuguese or Arab forts, and a litter of human skulls and bones on the beach at which they both shrieked in simulated horror.

These might have been the results of the last Somali raid, or of slaves who had died on the shore unshipped, owing to the vigilance of British cruisers, or even have dated back to the expulsion of the Portuguese by the Arabs two hundred years before. The town of Lamu was a two miles' walk along the sandy shore from the point where they had landed, but the sight of the extraordinary coloured, blue, red, and green crabs that scuttled and yet threatened with uplifted claws, and of the natives who accompanied them in a laughing rabble, some clothed to the heels, others practically naked, relieved the tedium of the journey. The smells from the precincts and the heart of Lamu town were so awful as to be interesting. The strongest — from rancid shark's liver oil — was said to be quite wholesome, but that from the sewage and the refuse on the shore-mud caused them to hold handkerchiefs to noses. However, the town was very picturesque with its Arab and Persian houses of white stone, its Saracenic doorways, in the angles of which Persian pottery was embedded, and its heavy doors of carved wood. The Consulate stood a little beyond the town, in a walled garden of palms, fig trees, and trees of gorgeous scarlet blossoms. Here they had a cup of tea, and the Consular boat, which had been following them along the shore, took them back to the *Jeddah,* thankful in the blazing sunshine for their pith helmets and white umbrellas.

This excursion somehow, with its introduction to the realities and romance of tropical Africa, braced up Lucy for the next day but one, when in the very early morning the *Jeddah* anchored in the roadstead of Unguja. She was dressed by eight o'clock and sat awaiting in the stuffy Ladies' Saloon the arrival of John, or whoever was coming to meet her. Sat with trembling, perspiring hands in open-work cotton gloves, wishing the suspense over. There were sounds of

loud voices on deck. . . . Mrs. Bazzard, exploding in connubial raptures over her husband; Bazzard, in between her embraces, striving to assume a partly respectful, partly comrade-like attitude with Captain Brentham, to combine a recognition that he was greeting his official superior for the moment with the assured standing of one who had had longer experience of official cares. She heard him saying: "Your boat is waiting for you, Sir. I will arrange to send a lighter for your baggage as soon as it is up out of the hold. . . ."

Then blundering steps down some stairway and along the passage, and John stood before her, sun-helmet in hand, eyes blazing with hungry love, saying, stammering rather—"My *Lucy!* C—Come at last! *Oh,* how I've looked forward. . . . How . . ." But he crushed her to him in a rough embrace, unmindful of her delicate cotton dress and of the fact that his red face was covered with perspiration. . . . But there was something so appealing and yet so masterful in his love, and also something so reminiscent of the park seat at Englefield and that Sunday walk, that Lucy in yielding to his embrace said within herself, "How *could* I have thought of throwing him over?"

Together they went on shore. Brentham had not even stayed to say good-bye. Somebody saw after her luggage. She had so lost interest in it that she did not care if anything was missing. . . . Then John said: "I hope you've brought out the Harmonium that your uncle gave us," and she replied a little listlessly: "Oh yes! it was *such* a bother getting it across London, but I think it's on board."

"I am taking you," said John, inconsequently, in the boat, devouring her with his eyes all the time, "to stay with Mrs. Ewart Stott until we're married."

CHAPTER VII

UNGUJA — AND UP-COUNTRY

EVERY two or three years in those days you met either Mr. *or* Mrs. Ewart Stott at Unguja, usually at the ramshackle residence and place of business of Mr. Callaway, the Commercial Agent of the East African Mission. And when Mrs. Ewart Stott was there she took command, so that you instinctively greeted her as hostess. Mr. Callaway was quite willing it should be so, because she accomplished wonders in setting his untidy house in order; she gingered up his servants and routed the cockroaches, chased away some of the smells, and generally cured a feverish attack by quinine, chicken broth, and motherly care.

The Ewart Stotts as missionaries were independent because Mrs. Ewart Stott had begun as Church of England and Mr. E. S. as a Presbyterian, yet they could not quite agree with the discipline or the ideals of the different churches or sects and preferred evangelizing East Africa on a plan of their own. They had private means — at any rate at first; until they had run through them in founding mission stations, whereafter they were supported by anonymous benefactors. And as their tenets and *modus operandi* were nearest to those of the Methodists' East African Mission, they worked alongside them and made use of their Agent and depôt at Unguja.

Both were of Ulster parentage, with some admixture of a more genial stock; yet both were born in Australia. She as a Miss Ewart and he originally a Mr. Stott. At the same moment, so to speak, they had " found

Christ," and it really seemed a logical sequel that Providence should bring them together at some Australian religious merry-making. They instantly fell in love, quickly married and fused their surnames. She was twenty, he twenty-two. She was distinctly personable and he quite good-looking. They had probably been born, both of them, perfectly good, unconsciously sinless, so that the getting of religion did not make them better or more likeable but only afflicted them with a mania for quoting hymns, psalms, and Bible texts *à tout propos* and seeing the Lord's hand, His Divine interference in every incident, every accident, any change for better or worse which affected themselves. They were constantly in receipt of Divine intimations generally after communing in prayer. And these they obeyed as promptly as possible.

For instance, only six months after they were married, and when their eldest child was already on its way, they were inspired to evangelize East Africa. Forthwith they sold up their home in South Australia, took ship with an immense outfit to Aden, and thence transferred themselves to Unguja and the Zangian mainland.

They wished to preach nothing but "Christ crucified" and the new life which black men and white men should lead after "accepting of" this sacrifice, this atonement for the presumed sinfulness of poor, martyred humanity. But despite this broad, if illogical, basis of their propaganda, they were afflicted with a bitter dislike of Science, which they concentrated on the theory of Evolution, or on any Biblical criticism which would weaken their faith in a very manlike God who apparently turned his back on his own universe to concern himself solely and very fussily, very ineffectively with one of its grains of dust, a tiny planet circling round a fifth-rate star among a billion other stars. For the rest, they had infinite courage, infinite

love and charity, immense powers of work, but no sense of humour.

Consul after Consul warned them as to the risks they ran in plunging — Father, Mother and Babies — into unexplored Africa of the worst reputation. They smilingly ignored warnings and protests, . . . wild beasts, wild peoples, wild climates, wild scenery — all seemed against them. Mr. Stott was once tossed by a rhinoceros into a river; but the water broke his fall and he emerged before the crocodiles woke up, and staggered back to camp, only slightly wounded. Shortly afterwards, hundreds of Masai warriors charged their camp, and their coast porters fled into the bush. The naked, fat-and-ochre-anointed warriors with their six-foot spears found Mrs. Stott sipping tea at her camp-table and sewing clothes for her baby, while Mr. Stott with bound-up wounds was lying on a camp-bed. Mrs. Stott, convinced that the Almighty was somewhere in the offing, smiled on the warriors and shared her plum cake among the foremost. They returned the smile, enlarging it into a roar of laughter. After executing a war dance they withdrew, and later on sent her a large gourd of fresh milk.

After some floundering, owing to the uncertain indications of the Divine will and purpose, they had settled on the old explorer and missionary route to the Victoria Nyanza, due west of Unguja in what was called the Ugogo country, partly because the Wa-gogo were thought to be quite recalcitrant to Christianity.

Lucy Josling, who had had much of this summary poured into her half-attentive hearing by her betrothed, as they walked through the narrow lanes between the tall stone houses of Unguja — she much more interested by the handsomely dressed Arabs, the veiled women, the wandering bulls and their owners, salaaming Indians — entered at last the Arab house rented by Mr. Callaway for his Agency.

Passing through a dark entry and corridor they emerged into a courtyard with an immense fig-tree in the middle. Round this square space there was a broad and shady verandah. Mrs. Stott rose from her sewing-machine and greeted Lucy with that simple cordiality which made her so many friends among the converted and the unconvertible.

"You must feel quite dazed being on shore after so many weeks at sea. You'd like to go to your room, I know, and perhaps be quiet there till our midday meal. We've done the best we could for you — at short notice — for your young man and I have only been at Unguja since Saturday. We travelled down together, he to get married, of course, and I to see to a large consignment of goods that has arrived for us here. I also expected a recruit for our Mission, but he does not seem to have caught this steamer."

Mrs. Stott then led the way to Lucy's room, and John departed to the Customs House to clear her baggage and get it stored: a matter which would occupy him for the rest of the daylight.

Although the upstairs bedroom that Lucy was to occupy smelt, like all the rest of the premises, of copra, aniseed, cockroaches, dried fish, shark's liver oil, curry-powder, rats' and bats' manure, in one badly mingled essence, with this and that ingredient sometimes prevailing, it seemed clean and airy, and there was some grace and refinement in the clean bed linen, white mosquito curtain, and bunch of Frangipani flowers in a Persian pottery vase. Instinctively she turned to Mrs. Stott with tears in her eyes. "This is *your* doing, I am sure! Somehow you remind me of mother."

"Well," said Mrs. Stott, "that's just what I should like to do; though I suppose I'm not older than an elder sister; only this African life ages one very quickly."

The heat during the rest of the day seemed to Lucy

in this low-ceilinged room, in a low-lying part of the town, almost unbearable. She spent much of the afternoon lying on her bed in *déshabille,* a constant prey to home-sickness. She tried at one time playing with the little Stott child on the landing, but it was much more interested in the large red-black cock-roaches which it caught with surprising swiftness of aim and without any of Lucy's shuddering horror. It would hold these insects with their little flat heads, twirling antennæ, scratchy legs and fat yellow bellies quite firmly (yet not unkindly) in its plump fingers for grave consideration; then let them go to run over the planks. Mrs. Stott was away to the Customs House; a pale, perspiring, half-clothed Indian clerk was passing in and out of the house on Mr. Callaway's business, too fever-stricken and listless to care one grain of damaged rice about this young woman fresh from England. The fleas on the ground-floor verandah and business premises were too numerous for any novice to endure. Lucy's only resource was to return to her room, rid herself of these persecutors by undressing and await with patience the after-sunset cooler air. A visit from Mrs. Stott at half-past six notified that the evening meal would be served at seven and that John Baines had seen to all Lucy's luggage. Such as she wanted for the next few days was ready to be brought up for her use; the rest would be put in the go-down to await the departure in the "dau" [1] that would convey them to the mainland. Lucy therefore had to rise and dress, come down and force herself to show some affection for her betrothed and some interest in her mass of luggage — all the while preoccupied by the mosquitoes which bit her ankles, the fleas that attacked her with renewed voracity, the cockroaches which scurried about her feet, and the smells which made her sick. She enjoyed the chicken broth flavoured with

[1] Decked Arab sailing-ship.

hot red chillies and the coco-nut milk served round for drinks at the evening meal; and picked a bit of fish, fresh and flaky. Also she appreciated the dessert of pineapples, mangoes and oranges. Instead of coffee afterwards they had tea, with goat's milk. This was thirst-quenching and helped to diminish the racking headache which had been steadily reaching a climax during the evening.

At nine o'clock all vestiges of a meal were cleared away and John, Mr. Callaway and even Mrs. Stott assumed an air of portentousness as about twenty-four able-bodied Negroes filed in and the two or three Negro servants of the Stotts set out a number of hymn-books and a large Bible. John then read prayers and a portion of scripture in Swahili while the Christianized negroes dutifully knelt, sat, and stood to sing hymns in unison with their white employers. The hymns being likewise in the Swahili language, the whole ceremony — occupying about half an hour — was without meaning to Lucy, who was driven nearly frantic by the fleas and mosquitoes. At last, bed-time came; John unwillingly took his leave, promising to call round for Lucy at eight in the morning to take her on a round of visits. Lucy, in very low spirits, retired to her bedroom, but Mrs. Stott followed. Without being asked for any explanation she was allowed to cry for five minutes on Mrs. Stott's neck. Then the latter undressed her, rubbed the bites with some cooling lotion, administered five grains of quinine and put her to bed.

What with the squeaking and chattering of the fruit-bats eating the figs outside, the rats running over the floor of her room, and a tornado of thunder, lightning and drumming rain, the night was not a pleasant one. But when Mrs. Stott woke her with a cup of tea and she ventured outside her mosquito-curtain, things took a brighter aspect. She had from her window a glimpse of the sparkling blue bay in the level rays of the just-

risen sun, a fringe of coco-nut palms, their fronds still wet with the rain, a tangle of brown shipping — Arab "daus" and Indian "baghalas" — hauled up for repairs; and the atmosphere was cleared and fresh after the tornado. She was almost cheerful by the time she had dressed and come downstairs. Mrs. Stott had advised her to put on high boots to save her ankles from mosquito bites, and to dust herself freely with Insecticide powder to discourage the fleas. As a special indulgence to a tired visitor she was let off morning prayers and only heard the nasal singing whilst completing her toilet in her room after a pleasant little breakfast in bed, over a book. John duly came with a carriage borrowed from the Sultan's stables, and Lucy — almost gay once more — set out with him to be introduced to Archdeacon Gravening — who in the absence of the Bishop (on tour) was to perform the religious marriage ceremony at the Cathedral.

Gravening was an austere-looking man but of kindly disposition. He made her feel at home, and as he knew the Reading district in old Oxford days of walking tours and reading-parties he could talk about that home-country which, as it receded in time from her contemplation, seemed a Paradise she had recklessly quitted.

The ladies of the Anglican Mission — a celibate Mission when at work in Africa, its members being supposed to leave its ranks when they married — received Lucy with some detachment of manner. They were good creatures, indeed, but they came from a social stratum one or even two degrees higher than hers, and inwardly they were less tolerant of Nonconformists than were their men fellow-workers. Lucy, they had ascertained, was a "Church person," but she was about to marry into a Methodist Mission. However, her rather plaintive prettiness and the home-sick melancholy in her eyes enlisted their womanly sympathy.

Two of them offered themselves in a bride's maid capacity, and the Sisterhood in general proposed that the honeymoon should be spent at their little country retreat of Mbweni. But John explained as to this, that he could not prolong his absence from the up-country station more than was just necessary for the prescribed residence at Unguja; and that their honeymoon must be spent on the return journey. He dilated, for Lucy's encouragement, on the picnic charms of the "Safari." [1]

* * * * *

During the ten days of her pre-nuptial stay at Unguja Lucy had no talk with Brentham. Presumably he was too busy over political and Consular matters. Once indeed when walking with John through the winding streets of the African-Oriental city she had seen him out riding with Bazzard, the Vice-Consul. John had accomplished all the preliminary formalities, and on her marriage morning — early on account of the heat — Lucy went in one of the Sultan's carriages, attended by Mrs. Stott and the two ladies of the Anglican Mission, to the British Agency. John met them at the entrance; they walked slowly up the stone steps to the office for the transaction of Consular business. Bazzard, with Mrs. Bazzard — the latter assuming the airs of a Vice-reine — met them there and ranged the wedding party in order. Brentham then entered, bowed to them both, but avoided meeting Lucy's eyes. He put to them in a level business-like voice the necessary interrogatory and declared them duly married. The party then passed into one of the Agency's drawing-rooms. Champagne — and lemonade for the teetotalers — was served, together with mixed biscuits and sweetmeats. The Acting Consul-General proposed the health of the Bride, and for the

[1] The accepted meaning of "Safari" is a journey with tents, and porters to carry the baggage.

first time looked Lucy full in the face. He next withdrew on to a verandah and talked for some time with the bridegroom about his mission station and the journey thither and spoke earnestly on the subject of Lucy and her welfare, instancing his interest in her home-country as well as his position as "their" Consul to explain his anxiety as to her future. Then returning to the general company he handed Lucy a small case which he said contained a trifling wedding present and wished her all possible happiness, promising "some day or other" to visit her in her new home. He grasped her hand with a brief pressure and — pleading urgent business as an excuse for not following the party to the Cathedral — withdrew to his office. Mrs. Bazzard introduced her husband and bestowed a condescending patronage on Lucy and on the Mission ladies, who, never having met her before, found themselves almost audibly wondering who on earth she was, and where — with that slightly cockney accent — she had come from.

The religious ceremony at the Cathedral was one of considerable ecclesiastical pomp, secretly enjoyed by John Baines; who, however, thought on what mother would say when he told her he had nearly been married by a Bishop and quite so by an Archdeacon, and still more how she would have appreciated the black acolytes in their scarlet cassocks and white dalmatics, the incense-smell in the building, and the vestments of the clergy.

After they left the Cathedral they repaired to the Arab house of stone and rich Persian and Kurdish carpets in which Archdeacon Gravening lived. Here an unpretentious luncheon was given as a wedding breakfast. Gravening hardly ever spoke about religion, which was why Mrs. Stott despaired of his being saved, though she admitted he was compact of quiet kindness. His one enthusiasm was language study.

He was deeply versed in the Bantu languages and translated for the Anglican Mission most of the works they required to use in their schools and churches. He had corresponded with John Baines, and the latter had written down for him samples of vocabularies of the different languages heard in his district.

Some insight into the conflict going on in the dazed mind of Lucy — who throughout these ceremonies looked as though she were a wound-up automaton — inspired Mrs. Stott to suggest to John that as they were due to start in the Arab dau early the next morning in order to reach the mainland port of Lingani before nightfall, Lucy should spend the rest of her marriage-day and night with Mrs. Stott, and their honeymoon should not commence till they reached the Mission house at Lingani. This they would have to themselves for three or four days whilst their caravan for up-country was being got ready. Accordingly poor John, when the wedding luncheon was over and the guests had dispersed, surrendered Lucy to Mrs. Stott and spent the rest of the day rather disconsolately making his preparations for departure. Lucy got through much of that hot afternoon in her nightdress — for coolness — inside the mosquito curtains of her bed, weeping at times hysterically; tortured with homesickness one minute and at another seized with a mad longing to call on Brentham at the Agency and see him once more. Sometimes she felt an actual dislike for John; at others a great pity for him, yet a shuddering at the idea of his embraces, of any physical contact with him.

Mrs. Stott prayed for her, apart in her own bedroom, but the Divine direction of her thoughts seemed to take the line that the least said was the soonest mended, and that the young couple had better be left to

their own society at Lingani to come to an understanding.

The next morning, however, it was a composed though rather silent Lucy who was punctually ready to go away with John when he came to fetch her to embark in the dau. Mrs. Stott had risen early to make coffee for them and give them a send-off of embraces, and provisions for a nice cold lunch on board. "My dear," she said to Lucy, "you'll have a *delightful* water picnic. There's going to be just wind enough to blow you across. I wish I were coming with you, but I shan't get away for another fortnight. However, we shall meet in the interior, I dare say, before very long."

John had made for his bride a little nest among cushions and clean brightly-coloured grass mats in the deck cabin of the dau (a mere palm-thatch shelter), and for an hour or so a smile came back to Lucy's sad face as she appreciated the pleasant freshness of the morning breeze, the picturesqueness of the boat and the vivid blue or emerald green of the water according as it was deep or shallow. She had quite an appetite for the early lunch which Mrs. Stott had thoughtfully provided. But presently an anxious look came into her face and a restlessness of manner. "John! Can I be coming out in a rash? I feel an intolerable itching round my neck and wrists — Oh! Horror! What is this?" And she pointed to some flat, dark brown disks which were scurrying out of sight up her arms and into the folds of her linen bodice. . . .

"*Bugs!*" said John, shocked and apologetic, "they are sometimes found in these Arab vessels. . . . I am *so* sorry. . . . Yet there was no other way of crossing to Lingani. . . ."

Lucy went white with disgust. From the palm midribs which arched over the cabin roof of thatch there

came dropping hundreds of bugs on to the unhappy young woman, ignoring or avoiding him who would have willingly offered himself as sacrifice and substitute. Lucy in her dismay, knowing she could not undress before the boatmen and porters and yet not knowing how she could endure hours of this maddening irritation from half-venomous bites, broke out into weeping. "What *was* to be done?" questioned the poor distraught bridegroom. The gentle breeze had died away . . . an intense heat prevailed; the dau scarcely moved across a glassy sea . . . the Nakhodha or Swahili captain of the dau was standing up over the rudder and signalling with his sinewy hand, crying out in a melodious cadence: "Njôô! Kusi-Kusi, Njôô, Kusi-Kusi!" [1] afraid his vessel might be becalmed and prevented from reaching port in daylight. The boatmen and porters were looking at one another with round eyes as they heard the Bibi [2] crying convulsively in the deck cabin. John in his desperation had a bright idea. He knew that the ordinary, vaunted insecticides had no terror for, no deterrent effect on, either bugs or their unrelated mimics, the poisonous ticks of Central Africa; but that both alike fled before the smell of petroleum. There were tins of that mineral oil on board, provision for his lamps up-country. Opening one of these cautiously, for petroleum was very precious, he filled an enamelled iron cup and then stoppered the tin. From his medicine chest he obtained cotton-wool. Then with wads of this, and with his handkerchief, he dabbed the swollen wrists and the weals on Lucy's neck and advised her to thrust the saturated wads and linen inside her clothing.

The strong odour of the oil in a few minutes caused the blood-sucking insects to withdraw and return to their lairs in the thatch and boards. The south wind

[1] "Come south wind, come!"
[2] Lady.

came at last in puffs, which lessened the heat, but there set in a swell which caused the dau to roll. This movement disturbed the bilge water below the decks, and from this was disengaged a sulphuretted-hydrogen stench almost bad enough to drive the bugs from Lucy's mind. But the wind grew steadier and at last blew the rotten dau to the landing-place at the mouth of a river where they were to disembark.

Lingani was a smaller edition of Unguja Town: flat-roofed Arab houses of white-washed coral rock, thatched wattle-and-daub huts, groves of coco-nut palms, a few Casuarina trees and Frangipani shrubs, pariah dogs, wandering zebu cattle, and dwarf goats. The Mission Rest-house was a substantial stone building in the Arab style of East Africa. It was maintained jointly by four missionary societies for use by their members in transit. There was a Swahili couple in charge of it, husband and wife. The bed linen, table-cloths, napkins and cutlery were kept in cupboards fastened with cunning padlocks, which only opened when you set the letters of the lock to correspond with the word "open." This to thwart inquisitive natives, with a smattering of education, was written up for reminder in Greek letters. With this ruse John was fully acquainted, so that he lost no time in opening the cupboards and releasing the wherewithal for making up two beds and laying the table for an evening meal. The black housekeepers, proffering greetings and assurance of welcome while they worked, busied themselves in heating water for baths, in making the beds, laying the table, and killing chickens for soup and roast. John's activities were multifold. He had to see the dau unloaded and its precious cargo safely stowed away in the store below the Rest-house.

Lucy at first sat limply in the divan or main reception-room, sore all over, eyes blistered by the glare of sun on water, and with a headache which for crippling

agony exceeded anything she had known. But she conquered her sullenness and made feeble attempts to help. John, however, seeing that bath and bath water were ready and that sheets, pillows and blankets had been placed on her Arab bedstead (a wooden frame with a lattice-work across it of ox-hide strips), advised her to undress, soothe her bites with spongings and ointment, and rest between the sheets. Her back ached unbearably; her head seemed half-severed at the neck, and she was seized with violent shiverings. The mosquitoes had given her a sharp attack of malarial fever.

Once in bed, she felt less acutely ill, but of all the nice meal that John and the Swahili man-cook had prepared she could only swallow a cup of tea. Her temperature was found to be up to 102°, so the first and the six succeeding nights of the honeymoon were spent in dire illness and dreary convalescence. But at the end of that time she seemed well enough to start on their up-country journey. John had obtained two Masai donkeys and had bought at Unguja a second-hand side-saddle. Lucy cheered up at the prospect of donkey-riding and above all at leaving this terribly hot coast town for the cooler nights of the interior. Though still deeply depressed and disheartened, she was sufficiently reasonable and well-disposed to be deeply touched by her husband's care of her, his forethought for her comfort and distress at the inconveniences of semi-savage Africa. Some measure of health came back to her, and even cheerfulness, during the first easy days of camp life, before they left the semi-civilized coast-belt, with its shady mango-trees for the midday halt, its unfailing water supply for the thirsty porters and the white man's meals; its comparative safety at night from wild beasts and wild natives.

But between the mountain ranges of the interior — whither they were bound — and this settled country of

cultivation and villages more or less governed by the Sultan of Unguja, there lay a desert tract almost devoid of water and ravaged in recent times by a clan of the raiding Masai known to the Bantu natives as "Wahumba." They had recently carried out a ruthless foray across the plains. The native wells had fallen in or their location had been forgotten since the destruction of the villages. Lucy then knew for the first time what it was to suffer from thirst, and to have no water for washing in the morning or evening; and when a little water was obtained from nearly dried up rock-pools or the bed of a run-dry stream, to be hardly able to endure the sight of it, much less taste it, when it looked like strong tea, or coffee-and-milk, when it smelt of stable manure or was alive with grubs or wriggling worms. It could only be drunk in the form of tea, after it had been strained, boiled, and skimmed.

John had prepared for some such contingency in crossing this desert strip by bringing several dozen coco-nuts and a case of his father's cider — at the mention of which Lucy's mouth watered. But his porters in their own mad thirst had disposed of the coco-nuts and their milk, and the carrier who bore the case of champagne cider on his head had, of course, slipped on a slimy boulder, crossing a dry stream, down had come his precious load, and at least half the bottles had cracked and poured forth their sparkling contents over the sand or into the porter's protruded mouth. Still, the other six bottles were retrieved by an indignant John who, in his rage, doffed the gentle long-suffering missionary — which, strange to say, he had become in these few months — witness his unselfish and patient care of his rather peevish wife — and kicked the careless, sticky, half-drunk porter with all the vehemence of an unregenerate Englishman. The porter took his chastisement philosophically. He had tasted nectar. John and Lucy drank the remainder of the cider dur-

ing the second half of that day, without care for the morrow's drought, for fear lest they be robbed of it by some other accident. . . .

At last they reached a running stream at the base of the foothills which marked the beginning of a slow ascent of three thousand feet. The verdure, and the shade this created, seemed by contrast a Paradise. They pitched their camp under fine umbrageous trees, near the site of a ruined village which a few months previously had been a populous centre. Around the mounds of clay and sticks and burnt thatch were luxuriant banana plantations with occasional bunches of ripening bananas — though the monkeys of the adjacent thicket had not left many fit for eating. When Lucy had quenched her thirst exuberantly from the rivulet, drinking from cups of folded banana fronds made for her by the repentant porter of the broken cider bottles, her sense of relief and contentment at their surroundings was a little marred by the consciousness of an unpleasant odour which came to them fitfully in puffs of the afternoon breeze. She started out to explore on her own account — she wore high boots and had a tucked-in, constricted skirt. Presently she came to an extensive clearing where banana trunks, brown and rotten, had been felled and lay prone in all directions, half covered with the clay tunnels and galleries of white ants. Amongst these crumbling cylinders lay twenty or thirty skeletons, some of them still retaining strips of leathery flesh and patches of Negro wool on the whitened skulls. The ground at the rustle of her approach began to swarm with a myriad of black, biting ants, disturbed in their daily meal off this immense supply of carrion. Lucy paid little heed to them for the moment as she stood horror-struck at the sight of hissing snakes, gliding into the rank weeds, probably more concerned over the swarming of the ants than at the approach of a solitary human

being. She also noted a group of large, grey-brown vultures with lean whitish necks, which hopped heavily before her until they obtained enough impetus to rise above the ground and settle on the branches of a baobab-tree. Lucy, horrified by this unsavoury Golgotha and the slithering snakes, was uttering several squeaks of dismay, when as the terrible "siafu" ants began to nip the skin of her limbs and body, her cries changed to shrieks of terror. Half-blindly she floundered over disgusting obstacles back towards the camp.

John, looking very tired and very dirty, came rushing to meet her and upbraid her for imprudence in wandering off alone where there was danger at every turn; but, realizing she was being mercilessly bitten by the "siafu," he hurried her into the tent, let down the flaps of the entrance and assisted her to undress. She had to be reduced to absolute nudity before the ants could be removed. They had fixed their mandibles so firmly in the skin that in pulling them off the head and jaws remained behind, and for weeks afterwards this unhappy young woman went about with a sore and inflamed body.

But this seeming outrage on her modesty greatly eased their intercourse. They had been for several days husband and wife, but there was still a certain stiffness and reserve in their relations. This disappeared after Lucy was obliged in broad daylight to submit her tortured body to his ministrations. In this new *camaraderie* she was soon laughing over her misadventure; whilst John acted clumsily as lady's maid.

Two days afterwards they were further drawn together by a thrill of terror. The region having been temporarily depopulated by Masai raids, wild beasts — lions, leopards, hyenas — had been emboldened in their attacks. John's camping places were encircled each evening by a hedge of thorns, and the porters kept up — or were supposed to keep up — blazing fires. But

one night in the small hours the tired sentries fell asleep, the fire in front of the tent died down, a lion sprang the hedge, crunched the sentry's skull, and tore at their tent doorway with his claws — attracted by the smell of the donkeys tethered behind. His horrible snarls and growls and the outcry of the awakened men roused John and Lucy. In their movements they knocked over camp washstand and table and could not find the matches or the lantern. John was uncertain where to fire even when he had found his loaded rifle. He dared not shoot into the midst of the growls, lest the bullet should kill the plunging donkeys or strike one of his men. They in their desperation — and, to do them justice, in their desire to save the white man and his wife — were tackling the lion with firebrands, yet feared to shoot his huge body — tangled up with tent ropes and tent flaps — lest they should shoot master or mistress. Lucy swooned across the bed with terror when she felt the lion's body pressed against the thin canvas of the tent wall. . . . The tent, even, seemed in danger of collapsing under the lion's pressure, as he backed on to it to face the men. At last, fear of the fire dislodged him. He stood or rather crouched against a pile of boxes for a few minutes; then realizing that the way to the exit was clear, he bounded towards it over the dead body of the slain porter. But before he quitted the premises he seized adroitly one of Lucy's two milch goats and, breaking its neck, trailed it over his shoulders and plunged down a ravine. The men followed him with a fusillade of shots from their Snider rifles, but probably in the darkness all went wide. The lion remained in the ravine alternately crunching and growling — but *such* growling! — the English verb is feeble to express the blood-curdling sound.

Day broke at last. John roused himself, detached gently the hysterically-clutching hands of his wife, who

alternately implored him not to expose himself to any more danger and not to leave her to die by herself in the wilderness, but to turn back with her that very day and seek for some safer Mission post at the Coast or in Unguja itself. He put his clothes into better order, knelt and prayed for a few minutes: then tidied the tent space a little and overhauled his rifle. Next, rummaging for ammunition and putting it handy in his side pockets, he issued from the tent, carefully fastening the door flaps after him. He questioned the men in broken Swahili as to the lion's whereabouts. "Chini, Bwana, hapa karibu, ndani ya bondēe . . . Below, master, near here, within the ravine," they answered; and the lion, hearing the raised voices, gave a confirmatory growl which reached to the ears of the shaking Lucy in the tent. She arose, her teeth chattering with terror, and looked out through a slit in the tent door. She saw and heard John call for the headman and guessed that he was marshalling eight of his most courageous porters, the "gunmen" of the expedition, to sally out with him and attack the lion.

This beast, having nearly finished the goat, had no intention of leaving the neighbourhood of the camp. He intended to have next, one by one, the two donkeys; and after he had eaten them, the humans. The ravine seemed a convenient place in which to repose till he was hungry again. . . .

The porters read the lion's mind correctly: "He will wait there, master, till we are breaking camp and then attack the donkeys, and perhaps the one with Bibi on his back. We shall never get him in such a favourable position again. See! He is down there below, looking up at us. He can scarcely rush up this side of the ravine. . . ." John Baines grasped the situation; he quickly placed himself in the middle of the eight braves, who knelt on one knee in between the tree stems on the edge of the steep descent. All at the

word "Fire!" sent a converging volley (which deafened Lucy in the tent) at the great head with its wide-open yellow eyes . . . and as the smoke cleared away the head was a shapeless mass of blood and brains and the lion was utterly dead.

A shout of triumph arose from the elated men, and the whole force of the caravan — thirty-two men without the poor wretch who had been killed in the night — went tumbling down the ravine to disembowel the lion and cut off its skin for "Bwana" who had shown himself such a man of spirit.

John betook himself to Lucy's tent, exultant. He had killed a lion! He almost forgot to kneel down and send up a thanksgiving for the Divine protection accorded to them. Lucy dried her eyes and at last made an effort to dress and swallow a little breakfast. As her nerves were shattered by the "close call" they had had in the night, and as a burial service must be held over the dead porter and the loads be readjusted, John announced there would be no march that day.

But the next morning Lucy could hardly sit her donkey. And by ill-luck the caravan had only just started and was passing through more ruined banana plantations — another charnel house of the last Masai raid — when it was abruptly halted by a shout of "Nyoka!" Owing to the obstacles of the felled banana stems it was difficult to diverge from the narrow track; and, barring the men's way, in the middle of that track an unusually large "spitting" cobra had erected itself on the stiffened tail-third of its length and was balancing its flattened, expanded body to and fro, threatening the advance of the caravan. It should have been a comparatively easy matter to fell it with a well-flung banana stem, but meanwhile the file of porters halted, and John, impatient to find out the cause of the halt, urged on his donkey to flounder through the vegetation along the track and reach the

head of the caravan. Lucy's donkey was so devoted to her sister ass that she could never bear to be separated from her; so, unchecked by Lucy's limp clutch on the reins, she hurried forward. But when she saw the swaying cobra she bolted off to the left into the banana tangle, and the abrupt action flung her rider off amongst skulls and bones and rotting vegetation.

The headman, with a tent-pole, hurled adroitly at the aggressive snake, broke its back, the exasperated porters rushed forward and whacked it to pulp and then threw the remains far from the path, took up their loads and marched forward, hastening to leave so ill-omened a place. The cook and the personal attendant hurried to raise the unconscious, slightly stunned Lucy from her horrible surroundings and caught the donkey. The caravan, however, had to be halted afresh. Lucy was far too ill to ride. Yet a further stay could hardly be made in these surroundings. After a conference with the headman it was decided to rig up a " machila " or travelling hammock out of blankets, and a long pole, and to march on a mile or so to a better site for a camping place, and there await the lady's recovery. . . .

Poor John! It required, indeed, patience and resignation to the fitful ways of Providence to keep up heart against this succession of disasters. The loads were readjusted so as to release four men to carry the invalid; and the caravan moved on silently, in low spirits and without the accustomed song, till they reached a spot which satisfied their requirements of defensibility against lions, access to good water; shade; and no likelihood of biting ants or snakes. Such a place was found in an hour or two, and the overburdened porters gladly heard the decision to remain till the Bibi was well enough to travel.

Lucy when put to bed was alternately hysterical and delirious. She was suffering more from nervous

shocks than from bodily injuries, though several of the ant-bites were inclined to fester, and her left cheek, arm, and side were badly bruised from the fall amongst the bones. John, as he sat and watched her on the camp bed, thought what cursed luck had followed him since his marriage. He had twice made this journey between Hangodi and the coast, and although neither traversing of the hundred-and-fifty miles had been precisely an agreeable picnic, there had not occurred any really tragical incidents that he remembered. Going first to Hangodi, nine months ago, the Masai raids had not taken place; and on his coastward journey a month previously his guide must have taken him along a different path. Thus they had avoided these ruined villages with their rotting remains of massacres. He had often heard lions roar and seen snakes gliding from the path, and had crossed with a hop and a jump swarms of the dreaded "siafu." It was common knowledge that some Arab daus were infested with bugs. But none of these terrors had been obvious on his previous journeys, nor had there been such a scarcity of drinking water. It really seemed as though Divine Providence for some mysterious ends was to crowd all the dangers and disagreeables of an African *safari* into Lucy's wedding tour.

A talk with the headman helped to clear things up and settle plans. They were, at this new camp — by contrast with the others a very pleasant and salubrious place — about sixty miles from Hangodi and about fifty from the Evangelical Missionary Society's station of Mpwapwa. Here there lived a famous medical missionary. If a message were sent to him by fast runners he might reach them in four or five days with advice and medicines. . . .

Two of the swiftest porters of the *safari* were chosen to run through the tolerably safe Usagara country with a letter, with calico bound round them for food pur-

chase and a bag of rice tied to each man's girdle. John's revolver was lent to the more experienced of the two as some protection against wild beasts or lawless men. They were promised a present if they did the journey in two days.

* * * * *

There was nothing for it then but to keep Lucy well-nourished with broth made from tinned foods and beef-extract. The porter who had let drop the case of cider and had conceived an attachment for his mistress out of pity and remorse, set a snare one day and caught a guinea-fowl. This made an excellent nourishing soup. Another porter found a clutch of guinea-fowl's eggs. There was one remaining milch goat which yielded about a pint of milk daily.

With such resources as these John strove to prepare an invalid diet which could be administered by spoonfuls to a patient with no appetite and poor vitality. He had a small medicine-case of drugs, but knew not what to prescribe for nervous exhaustion. He scarcely left the vicinity of the tent during the day-time, and slept fully-dressed at night in a deck-chair close to Lucy's camp bedstead.

At the end of the fifth day the medical missionary arrived on a riding donkey with John's messengers, and six porters of his own carrying a comfortable travelling hammock. He diagnosed the case and took a cheerful view of it, but advised their setting out next day with him and attempting by forced marches to reach his station — fifty miles away — in two days. At Mpwapwa Lucy would be nursed back to health by his wife, and when she was fit for more African travel she should be sent on to Hangodi.

* * * * *

Six weeks afterwards she reached her husband's station in Ulunga, completely restored to health. The cool dry season had set in; the country she traversed

was elevated, much wooded, picturesque hill-and-dale threaded with numerous small streams, and her travelling escort, the medical missionary, was an interesting man with a well-stored mind who could explain much that she wanted to know.

On her arrival at Hangodi she found Ann Jamblin installed as a potent force in several departments of the station economy, the real mistress of the community. She had come up from the coast in the *safari* of Mrs. Ewart Stott. The marches had been well regulated, the camping places well chosen, the wild beasts had not annoyed them, and they had avoided the waterless tract. Ann was prompt to infer that Lucy had made far too much fuss over the petty discomforts of African travel, and Lucy began to take refuge in a proud silence — which one's persecutors call " sulks "— under Ann's gibes and obliquely slighting remarks.

CHAPTER VIII

LETTERS TO AND FRO

From Lady Silchester to Captain Brentham.

Englefield House,
July 12, 1887.

DEAR ROGER,—

The great event took place three weeks ago and I am just allowed to leave my bed and lie on a couch for a few hours every day — in my boudoir. Here I can wile away the time by writing letters.

It is a boy, so Francis ought to be in the seventh heaven of happiness as he now has a direct heir for the succession. Ought to be, but somehow isn't. Since I began to get better and take notice he does not seem as exuberant as I expected. He isn't *well.* I have a sort of idea he had a fainting fit in the House of Lords just when my crisis was coming on and that they kept it back from me. But I saw an allusion to it in an old *Times* which had somehow found its way into my sitting-room.

The infant is to be named James Francis Addington for ancestral reasons. I do not feel energetic enough to contest. I should have preferred *one* Christian name *only* — a multitude of names is so démodé and must be *so* confusing to the recording angels who don't recognize surnames. I wanted something a little baffling and out of the common such as Clitheroe or Passavant. Clitheroe is not the name of any relation, but I liked its sound — like the wind in the reeds, don't

you think? — and it would have been a new departure.

Little Clithy looks rather wizen as he lies asleep in his bassinette, but at his age most infants seem incredibly old and cynical, as though they were just finishing some life cycle and were peevish at beginning another.

Of course, Clitheroe's coming has *quite* ruled me out of the Jubilee festivities. Suzanne Feenix has been doing all the running, and quietly pushing *her* husband whilst I have been unable to secure any advancement for *mine,* who now seems quite lacking in ambition. Suzanne, by the bye, *l'on dit très toquée* of another good-looking African explorer, a rival of yours from West Africa. A pity you did not make her acquaintance — as I advised you to do — before you left. She has any amount of influence with Lord W.

How is the missionaryess? I am glad she was safely married to her missionary and withdrew herself into the interior. I feared otherwise there was going to be *another* entanglement: for I don't believe *in the least* you were a Galahad and faithful only to my memory in the days when we played at being engaged. I don't see why I should be specially interested in this young woman because she came from Aldermaston and her father is one of our tenants. . . . However, when I can once more ride I'll go over and look her people up and report on them. But I only hope you won't turn her head by taking all this interest in her affairs. *So* like you! And to think you once reproached *me* for inconstancy!

All the same, dear Roger, I do miss you — *dreadfully.* Francis *will* keep up the grand manner and won't tell me any cabinet secrets. My brothers and sisters don't interest me, mother is too anxious about father's affairs to leave him for long, and when she is here I am nervous about discussing them for fear they may want to borrow money from Francis.

I have sent Maud an invitation because she reminds me faintly of you. . . .

SIBYL.

From Mrs. Josling to Mrs. John Baines.

Church Farm
Aldermaston
July 30 (1887)

My darling girl

Father and me were so releaved at getting your letter ten days ago saying you had reached Unguja safe and sound and had just been married to John Baines by the Consul and at the Cathedral. It sounded quite grand being married twice, and I only hope youll be happy.

I went over to see Mrs. Baines at Tilehurst taking your letter with me but was receaved none too graciously. It seems John had not written to his parents to say he was married ~~or even that he~~ but I suppose he hadent time before being so busy over his preperations for starting up country.

Well my darling we both wishes you every happiness. Your letter dident tell us much but I suppose you were too busy having to start away on a ship the next morning. We both send our humble thanks to Captain Brentham for looking after you on the voyage. Lady Silchester has had her baby — in the middle of last June. Father and me drove over last week to pay our respecs and make inquiries. His lordship himself came out to see and was nice as he always is. He's very like his poor mother and she was always the lady and spoke as nice to her servants as to her titled friends. Well Lord Silchester rang for the nurse and baby so as we might see it. It looked to me

a poor little antique thing but of course I dident say so. It's been christened James after his Lordship's father but they say as her Ladyship wanted some other name more romantic like She came in from the garden as we were leaving and gave herself such airs I thought but Father says she's a rare piece for good looks and we all ought to be grateful to her for giving an heir to the estate to keep out the Australian cousin who might have ~~revvle~~ revolutionary ideas about farming. She ast after you a bit sarcastic like I thought. She says I hear your daughter flirted dredfully with my cousin Captain Brentham on the way out. I couldent help saying I dident believe it. My daughter I said would never be a flirt it wasnt in your nature. I felt so put out but his Lordship tried to make it come right by saying Her Ladyship musnt judge others by herself and that he quite believed me. Weve had a good hay crop and the wheat and root crops promises well. So Father's in rare good humour and says after harvest he's going to take us all to the seaside Bournemouth or Southsea. Clara and Mary's both well. They never ail as you kno. Young Marden of Overeaston is paying Clara some attention. Leastways he drops in to Sunday supper pretty often.

We all send our love and I hope with all my hart you will be happy and continu well. I shall go on being anxious about you till you come back. Praps the Primitives will give John a call after he's done his bit of missionary work and youll be able to live in England close to us. I shant be happy till this comes to pass.

Your loving mother
Clara Josling

From Mrs. Baines to her son John.

Tilehurst,
October 14, 1887.

MY DEAR SON,—

I suppose a mother must expect to come off *second best* when her son marries and I ought to think myself lucky to hear from you once a year. But I confess I *was* put out in the summer only to get news of you through Lucy's mother. However, your letter written August 3, after Lucy had joined you at Hangodi, came to hand a few days ago. You must have had a terrible time getting her up-country. She seems so feckless and born to trouble. As though wild beasts and accidents sought her out.

I've just had a line from Ann Jamblin. *She's* got her head screwed on the right way. She left a month after Lucy and yet reached your station nearly as soon as you did. She didn't need to hang about that place — I can't spell its name — where you got married, and, she travelled up-country, she says, in record time with a missionary lady, a Mrs. Stott. She didn't fall off her donkey or have a lion in her tent or get ants all over her or turn sick every few weeks. Nor yet have herself looked after by free-thinking captains on the voyage out. But there. You've made your bed as the saying is and you must lie on it. It's far from my wish to come between husband and wife, and I'm glad Ann's gone to your station. She'll have a steadying influence on Lucy and be a great comfort to you and your companions. I suppose by now she's married to your friend Anderson. If so, he'll have got a good wife and her bit of money will be a help.

Father's as well as he's ever likely to be. He suffers from brash, a sure sign of overeating.

Sister Simpson is going to marry Brother Wilkins, the sidesman of our Reading Chapel. At present she's

suffering from boils, but hopes to be well enough for the marriage next month. The Bellinghams at Cross Corner, Reading, Bakers and Fancy Confectioners, are in a bad way — going bankrupt they say. There's been a sad scandal about Pastor Brown at Bewdly wanting to marry his deceased wife's sister. It's forbidden I know in Holy Writ, though at time of writing I can't remember where, but see Leviticus xviii. and xx. Emily Langhorn has gone to London to learn dressmaking. Time she did and good behaviour likewise. I never listen to scandal, otherwise I should say it was all on account of her goings on with young Gilchrist. She took it very hard when he suddenly married Priscilla Lamb of Lamb's Boot Emporium, Abbey Road, Reading. I'm very glad I wouldn't have her here to the Dorcas meetings. She'd got her eye on you, I'm pretty sure. Sam Gildersleeves and Polly Scatcherd's got married, just in time it seems, to save her good name. People was beginning to cut her. Clara Josling, your wife's sister, is engaged to young Marden, a good-for-nothing cricketer. Plays with his brother and friends on Sunday afternoons. But I suppose you won't think the worse of him for that, now you've come under Lucy's influence. But oh what wickedness is coming on the world. Well, it can't last much longer. The vials of the Almighty's wrath are about to be opened and the Last Day is at hand — I feel and hope. I've advised your father to spend no more money on repairs at the Manufactory — It will last our time.

Meanwhile may God have you in his holy keeping. Father sends love. He's taken up with this new drink Zoedone and expects to make a lot of money out of it. Money, money, money and eat, eat, eat is all *he* thinks about. Still, that's better than breaking the Sabbath and running after strange women, which is what most of his neighbours is doing. And as to the women, it's

dress, dress, dress and play acting. Mrs. Garrett's bustle was right down shocking last Sunday. I couldn't keep my eyes off it during Chapel. They've been making so much money lately out of sanding the sugar and selling dried tea-leaves for Best Family Blend Afternoon tea that they don't know how to spend it, so Mrs. G. has begun to dress fashionable — at *her* age too — and Mr. G. goes to St. Michael's instead of coming to Salem chapel where his parents worshipped before him. And as to this play acting, its one of the signs of the times. They've opened a theatre at Reading and have afternoon performances.— Several of our Tilehurst folk have been seen there and Pastor Mullins spoke about it in last Sunday's sermon.

Your loving mother,
SARAH BAINES.

From Mrs. Spencer Bazzard to Mr. Bennet Molyneux, Foreign Office.

H.B.M. Vice-Consulate,
Unguja,
Novr. 1, 1887.

DEAR MR. MOLYNEUX,—

When am I to address you as "Sir Bennet"? — as it ought to be, if I dare express my thoughts. We look in each Honours' list expecting it. Spencer is quite bitter on the subject, but I tell him "comparisons are odious." At any rate I won't repeat his indiscretions.

We are all wondering here when Sir James Eccles is returning. I have not yet had the privilege of seeing him and can only take Spencer's opinions for guide. In Spencer's mind he is well-nigh irreplaceable. Spencer feels it would be little less than disastrous to place

the control of Ungujan affairs in the hands of any younger or less experienced man. With Sir James Eccles the Germans will try no nonsense. They might even renounce their protectorate in despair if he were to return and had the influence of his Government behind him. Whereas with a weaker man, or even with one of no authority, merely an "acting" Consul-General, they may go to *any* lengths. I am foolish enough about my Husband to think — if there *must* be a stop-gap — that he would be better than — well, than the present Acting Consul-General. Spencer thoroughly distrusts the Germans and refuses even to learn their ugly language; whereas C-p-n B. is much too friendly with them and has gone to the length of saying we must not play the dog in the manger over Africa. It seems there have been great German African explorers as well as English, and Spencer's colleague thinks it rather hard they should not have colonies as well as we. Not knowing your own views I hesitate to express mine. And I should not be so presumptuous as to ask for any guidance or any answer even to this letter. I dare say if you think Spencer is to have more responsibility and initiative in the future you will privately instruct him as to the policy of your department.

That will not help *me* much, for Spencer, where official correspondence is concerned, is as close as — I can't think of a parallel! I mean, he won't tell me *anything*. Not that I am inquisitive. But I *do* want to be a help to him, and I also believe in the education of women. I should like to know *all* about Africa! But I also know your views — though they shock me. If I may judge from our conversations on that never-to-be-forgotten Saturday till Monday — last Easter — when Mrs. Molyneux was good enough to ask me down to Spilsbury —— You think Woman should confine herself to superintending the household and her

husband's comfort, to dressing well, and should not concern herself with politics. You may be right. And yet there are moments in which I rebel against these prescriptions. It may have been my bringing-up. My dear father, an officer in the Navy, died when I was very young, and darling mother brought me up with perhaps too much modern liberality. She entertained considerably — in a modest way, of course — at our house in North Kensington, and I was accustomed therefore from girlhood to meet with many different types of men and women — some of them widely travelled — and to hear a great variety of opinions.

Here, however, when I have attended to the affairs of our household — a small one, since we no longer live in the big Consulate — and have paid an occasional visit to some other Consul's wife or the nicer among the missionary women, I give myself up to the study of Swahili, the local language. Spencer, who is strong in fifty things where I am weak or totally wanting, is not absolutely of the first quality as a linguist, while I seem to have rather a gift that way. I am much complimented on my French, and although I dislike German I force myself to speak it. I can now make myself understood in what Spence calls the "dam" lingo of the natives. And if I told you I was also grappling with Hindustani I am afraid you would class me unfavourably with your pet aversion, a "blue stocking"!

But I will defy your bad opinion. I am *determined* to fit myself for Spencer's promotion which must surely come in time, especially as we can both stand the climate fairly well. I have only been down once with fever since I came out, and Spence sets malaria at defiance with cocktails and an occasional stiff whisky peg. Between us before long we ought to know all that is worth knowing at Unguja. And Spence is *so*

popular with the natives. They instinctively look up to a *strong* man.

As to the missionaries they simply *swarm* on the island and the mainland. Some of the Church of England ones are quite nice and are really gentlemen and ladies. And there are one or two adorable old priests in the French Mission who pay me pretty compliments on my French and declare I must have learnt it in Paris. But there are also some awful cranks. There is a Mrs. Stott who puts in an appearance once in a way from some very wild part of the interior and asks me with great cheerfulness if I am saved, or if I love the Lord. It is wonderful how she keeps her appearance, as she goes about without a sunshade and has been tossed several times by rhinoceroses. Her voracity for hymn singing is *extraordinary*. Perhaps it acts on her constitution like these new Swedish gymnastics.

Quite another type of recruit for the Nonconformist Missions came out with me from England last spring. A National School mistress, I believe, originally. She was the daughter of a farmer in Lord Silchester's country. Some thought her pretty, but it was that prettiness which soon evaporates under a tropical sun. She seemed to me thoroughly insipid and had not even that faith in mission work which at least excuses the strange proceedings of her companions. As soon as the ship started she put herself under the wing of our Acting Consul-General who was not slow to reciprocate. They carried on a flirtation during the voyage which — but I am afraid I am not very modern — was *not* the best preparation for marrying a Methodist missionary — a dreadful *gauche*-looking creature who came to claim her at Unguja. However a woman should always stand by women, so I did the best I could for her when they were married by the Acting Consul-General.

That important personage — Is he a friend of yours? If so, I will promise to see nothing but good in him — prefers to live all alone in Sir James Eccles' house, where Spencer had transferred himself after Sir James's departure. We had proposed joining households with him, and I was *quite* ready to have made a home for him during his brief tenure of the post. But apparently he preferred my room to my company, so of course I did not press my offer. He entertains very little on the plea that he is too much occupied with work and study.

Well! If I write much more you will dismiss me as a bore. So I must sign myself,

Yours gratefully,

EMILIA BAZZARD.

P.S. I expect no answer. But if you do not order me to the contrary I shall post you from time to time a budget of gossip from Unguja in the hope that it may prove amusing.

There is no news at all of Stanley. Emin, they say, is still holding out. Each steamer brings more and more Germans, to Spencer's great disgust. E.B.

From Captain Brentham to his sister Maud.

H.B.M. Agency,
Unguja,
Decr. 1, 1887.

DEAR OLD MAUD,—

You *are* a good sort, and I am awfully grateful to you. Your letters never fail me each month as the mail comes in, and you send me just the papers and books I like to see in my isolation.

I have been here over six months and am getting rather weary of the office work. I don't suppose there is much chance of my being promoted to the principal post if Sir James Eccles does not come back. It would

be too rapid a promotion and excite frightful jealousy — though I really think I should do as well as any one else, and better than some. My Arabic and Persian are both useful to me here, and I have worked up Hindustani and mastered Swahili and get along very well with the Arabs and the big colony of British Indians. But I don't feel confident about F.O. approval. All these affairs pass through Bennet Molyneux's hands, and he does not like me for some reason, probably because he's an obstinate ass and hates being set right. I hoped Lord Silchester would have pushed me more, but according to Sibyl's letters he seems really ailing and to care about little besides his own health. Your account of your visit to Englefield last summer amused me very much. Sibyl has a good deal of the cat about her, but I quite understand from the very oppositeness of your dispositions you might get on very well — your straightforwardness and her guile. At any rate though I am a little sore still about her throwing me over for Silchester, I am ready to forgive her if she is nice to my one dear sister.

As to *you,* I never properly appreciated you till I came to live out here. If I could only get a settled position I think I should ask you to come and keep house for me. I daresay I shall never marry — the women I have felt drawn to have always married somebody else. It would do father good if he had to engage a housekeeper and a curate. He throws away far too much of the money he ought to leave some day to you on excavations at Silchester.

Well, as I say, I am getting rather tired of the office work I have to plough through day after day. There is endless litigation between the Hindu merchants and the Arabs. There are Slave cases every week and frequent squabbles with the French Consulate over slaving ships flying the French flag. And although I have a

" legal " vice-consul to help me, his decisions are sometimes awfully rotten and have to be revised.

I wasn't cut out for office work. If I were really Agent and Consul-General it would be different; I might take more interest in the storms of this Unguja tea-cup. And I should of course be properly in control of the mainland Vice-Consuls who at present seem to me to waste all their time big game shooting or ill in bed with fever due to too much whisky. But as I am only a warming pan for Eccles or some new man it is a very boring life. I have not been away from this little island once since I came out in May. I am therefore impatient to go over to my proper consular district on the mainland, and thoroughly explore it. It reaches to the three great lakes of the interior!

This Vice-Consul at Unguja is a queer sort of person. He was called to the bar a few years ago — unless he is personating another man! But his knowledge of Indian law is nil and he seems to have no intuition or perception of where the truth lies between scores of perjured witnesses. He is unable to learn languages, so he is quite at the mercy of the court interpreters. He drinks too much whisky, has an unpleasant mottled complexion, a shaking hand, and an uneasy manner with me, varying from deferential to what the French call " rogue." His wife who travelled out with me is *by no means* stupid. She is somewhat the golden-haired adventuress — her hair, at least, is an impossible gold except near the roots — her complexion is obviously, though very skilfully, made up, and generally she has a sort of false good looks just as she exhibits a false good nature. Every now and then one catches a glimpse of the tigress fighting for her own hand (which means in her case, her husband). She has probably been a governess at one time, and rumour makes her the daughter of a navy

paymaster's widow who kept a boarding house in Bayswater, which at one time sheltered Spencer Bazzard when he was down on his luck. He married her — I should guess — to pay his bill for board and lodging. She then took up his affairs with vigour and actually got him appointed Legal Vice-Consul here. She writes letters to Bennet Molyneux — sealed with lavender wax and a dove and serpent seal — I see them in the Mail bag — flatters him up I expect, and I dare say deals me every now and then a stab in the back. Her first idea when we came out was to fascinate *me* and take up the position of lady of the house at the Agency. I dare say she would have run it far better than I do and have made a very competent hostess. But the inevitable corollary of having her detestable, blotchy-faced husband as my commensal and letting her boss the show generally was too much for me, and I had to ask them to live in the Vice-Consulate hard by and let me dwell in solitude and peace in the many-roomed Agency. My maitre-d'hotel is Sir James's admirable Swahili butler, my cook is a Goanese — and first rate — and I have one or two excellent Arab servants. Of course I make a point of having the Bazzards frequently to dine or lunch, and I ask her to receive the ladies of the European colony at any party or entertainment. Nevertheless I have made an enemy. Yet she would be intolerable as a friend. . . .

The poor little missionary lady you ask about has, I guess, been having a pretty rough time of it up country. She has not written to say so: I only gather the impression from the "on dits" which circulate here. I do not like to show too much interest in her concerns because such interest in this land of feverish scandal might be so easily and malevolently misconstrued. Before she departed from Unguja for the interior I gathered that her chief anxiety was lest her mother should think her unhappy, and mistaken in her career

as a missionary. Farleigh is not so very far from Aldermaston (the address is "Mrs. Josling, Church Farm"). Perhaps one day you might find your way there and have a friendly talk with Lucy Baines's mother and father, and intimate that I am — as a Consul — keeping an eye on the welfare and safety of their daughter and son-in-law. He — Baines — seems a good-hearted fellow, but quite incapable of appreciating her real charm, even if he does not think it wrong for a missionary's wife to *have* charm. She is really a half-educated country girl, with a fragile prettiness which will soon disappear under the heat and malarial fever, with the mind of an unconscious poetess, the pathetic naïveté of a wild flower which wilts under transplantation. . . .

I mostly like the missionaries I meet out here; so you need not mind an occasional collection of Farleigh coppers and sixpennies being taken up on their account to the tune of From Greenland's Icy Mountains, etc. Our religious beliefs do not tally; but I do admire their self-sacrifice, their energy, and devotion. They are generally specialists in some one direction — native languages, folk-lore, botany, entomology, photography, or even, as in Mrs. Stott's case, the making of plum cakes. A very admirable solace to the soul, or — where the natives are concerned — means of conversion!

* * * * *

Your loving brother,

ROGER.

CHAPTER IX

MISSION LIFE

LUCY had reached her husband's station in the Ulunga country in July, 1887, at the height of the winter season, south of the Equator. The climate then of the Ulunga Hills was delightful; dry, sparkling, sunshiny and crisply cold at nights. Her health mended fast, nor did she begin to flag again till the hot weather returned in October and the height of the wet season, of the southern summer, made itself felt in December and January by torrential rains, frightful thunderstorms, blazing sunshine and the atmosphere of a Turkish bath. For several months after her arrival she made renewed and spasmodic efforts to play the part of a missionary's wife, to share her husband's enthusiasm, and to earn her living — so to speak — by her contribution of effort. If she had *only* never met Brentham and if *only* Ann Jamblin had stopped at home! She could not but admit the change in John was remarkable. He was less and less like either of his parents, less and less inclined to dogmatize; he had become as unselfish as such a self-absorbed, unobservant man could be. Intensely fond of work, especially manual work — carpentering, building, gardening, cutting timber, and contriving ingenious devices to secure comfort and orderliness — this backwoods life suited him to perfection. He was the head of the station, the principal teacher of the boys and men, the leader of the services in the chapel. He was responsible for the finances and general policy of the Mission.

Each of the stations of this Society in East Africa was a little self-governing republic. Once a year delegates from each East African station met at Mvita or Lingani, or some other convenient place, and conferred, agreed perhaps on some common policy, some general line of conduct. But there was much individual freedom of action. John, for example, was taking up a strong line against the Slave Trade. Since the dissolution of the Sultan's vague rule which followed the German invasion, the Arab slave traders had revived their slave and ivory caravans between Tanganyika and the Zangian coast owing to the great demand for labour in Madagascar and in the Persian Gulf. John had obtained such influence over the head chief of Ulunga that he had forbidden the Arabs transit through his lands, and instead of selling his superfluous young people or his criminals to the slave traders he sent them to the Mission to be trained in rough carpentry, reading and writing, husbandry and so forth. The very flourishing trade that Anderson carried on at the store made the Mission prosperous enough occasionally to subsidize the chiefs and reward them for sending their boys and girls to school and to be ostensibly converted to Christianity. Some black Muslims who had started teaching boys the Koran and elements of Muhammadanism in two of the villages were expelled, and a resolute war was made by John on the witch doctors of the tribe, who for a time were routed before the competition of Cockles' Pills and the other invaluable patent medicines which were just beginning to appear in tabloid form.

Brother Bayley's department was more especially the study of the native language. He translated simple prayers and hymns and passages of Scripture into the Kagulu dialect of Ulunga and rendered more educational literature into the wider-spread Swahili. He had a small printing-press with which he was labouring

to put his translations into permanent form; and besides this took a prominent part in the boys' education.

His personal hobby was butterfly and beetle catching. He devoted his small amount of leisure to collecting these insects and transmitting them to an agent in London to sell on his behalf. In this way he made a fluctuating fifty pounds a year, which was a pleasant addition to his meagre salary. It provided him with a few small luxuries and enabled him to send a present every now and then to his mother.

Then there was Ann Jamblin, of Tilehurst, a schoolfellow of Lucy, a sturdy, plump young woman of about twenty-seven, with a dead-white complexion, a thick skin, black hair, black eyebrows and hard eyes of pebble brown. She had actually arrived at Hangodi before Lucy herself, though she started out from home a month later, being of that exasperating type to whom nothing happens in the same *ratio* as to other people. She could never be run over, never be drowned at sea — Lucy thought — never slip on a piece of orange peel, never be assaulted in a railway carriage. Ann had been sent out by the Mission Board to be a bride for Brother Anderson (on a discreet suggestion of John's, who thought Anderson a little inclined to look amorously on comely negresses). But she had declined to fulfil the bargain when she arrived, denied indeed all knowledge of such an engagement, said she didn't want to marry any one: only to do the Lord's work and help all round. Her refusal had been taken philosophically by the person most concerned, on account of her unattractive appearance; and was further softened by her practical usefulness as an independent member of the Mission. She house-kept for the little community, attended to the poultry, goats and sheep, did much of the cooking, made the bread, the cakes, the puddings; darned the socks, mended the linen, and

taught the native girls the simple arts of British domestic life. She dressed with little regard to embellishment of the person, but with much attention to neatness and mosquito bites. Her humour was rough and her tongue lashed every one in turn. She had that unassailable independence of manner which is imparted by the possession of a private income of one hundred pounds a year and the knowledge that her martyrdom was voluntary and self-sought. Hardly ever ill herself, she nursed every one that was with almost professional ability.

Lucy secretly detested her, for she was always gibing at John's wife for being moony and unpractical, for her "æsthetic tastes," such as liking flowers on the table at meals; for succumbing quickly to headaches and megrims generally, and especially for the ease with which she was humbugged by the big girls of her school classes. Ann would also gird at her for lack of religious zeal. Ann herself took an aggressively hearty part in prayers and hymn-singing, and mastered the harmonium which had proved unplayable by Lucy. Ann even tried making her own translations of her favourite canticles into the native language and was not deterred or discouraged because in her first attempts and through the malice of her girl interpreters she had been misled into rendering the most sacred phrases and symbolism by gross obscenities. The delight of shouting out these improprieties in chapel before the blandly unconscious missionaries, when Brother Bayley was laid aside by fever, attracted large congregations.

If John Baines were seriously ill with a malarial attack, Ann would brush Lucy aside as unceremoniously as she ejected her from the harmonium stool. She would take complete charge of the sick man, reduce the fever, and make the broths and potions which were to sustain convalescence. When Lucy herself

was ill, Ann would either diagnose the attack as "fancy" or "hysteria," or a touch of biliousness, and cure it so drastically that Lucy made haste to get well in order to withdraw from her treatment.

This was an average day in Lucy's life at Hangodi in the first year of her stay there ——

6 a. m. Lucy is already awake; John still sleeping heavily. Lucy had been dreaming she was back at Aldermaston or else voyaging down the Red Sea with Brentham, and is still under the shock of disappointment as she lies gazing up at the dingy cone of mosquito net suspended over their bed from the rat-haunted roof. The bedstead is a broad structure — the Arab "angareb" — an oblong wooden frame with interlaced strips of ox-hide. On this foundation has been laid a lumpy cork mattress with well-marked undulations. On that again a couple of musty blankets and a sheet. For covering there is another sheet and a coverlet.

Lucy, hearing the awakening bell being tolled, nudges John, who is still snoring.

Lucy: "*John!* The first bell has gone!"

John: "Wha'?" (Gurgle, gurgle, snore cut short, lips smacked, heavy sighs.) —— "Wha'? Time to ger-up? Or-right."

He tumbles out of bed in his disarranged night-gown — paijamas were not introduced into the East Africa Mission till 1890. In doing so he tears the mosquito curtain with his toe-nails.

A native servant is heard filling two tin baths in the adjoining roomlet. They then proceed to take their baths in what — to Lucy — is disgusting promiscuity. The rest of the toilet is summarily proceeded with. (As John is fully hirsute there is no shaving to be done.) Then to avoid remonstrance from her husband Lucy kneels with him in prayers on a dusty mat,

in fear all the time some scorpion may sting her ankles. One did, once.

At half-past six another bell goes — how the converts love bell-ringing! — and they hurry out to the Chapel where the other members of the Mission staff and a posse of native boys and girls meet them. More prayers, a psalm, and a hymn sung lustily but disharmoniously.

Then the whites adjourn to the house or large hut where the meals of the community are served. The dining-table is of rough-hewn planks of native timber, and on either side of it there are similarly rough forms to sit on, with a native stool at either end of the table. The breakfast consists of porridge and milk, the porridge being made of native cereals and often a little bitter. There is coarse brown bread with a sour taste as it is made with fermented palm wine. There are butter from a tin — rather rancid — potted salmon, and bantams' eggs from the native poultry, so underboiled that they run out over the plate when opened.

John asks a blessing on the meal. They then proceed to eat it, while the males drink with some noisiness the tea that Ann pours out. "You don't seem to have much appetite this morning, Lucy," says Ann of malice prepense: "Porridge burnt again? What is it?"

"Thank you. There is nothing wrong with the porridge, so far as I know. I am simply not hungry."

"Ah! Been at those bananas again. They're very sustaining. But you'll never be well if you eat between meals."

"*I* eat *at* meals and *between* 'em," says Brother Anderson, "and I'm glad to say loss of appetite don't never trouble *me*. This is a rare climate to make and keep you hungry."

Anderson is voracious and somewhat lacking in table manners, defects atoned for by his being an unremitting worker and well contented with his lot — Eupeptic, as we learnt to say at a later date. But he keeps his spoon in his cup and holds it steady with a black-rimmed thumb when he drinks. He also helps himself to butter with his own knife, talks with his mouth full, and never masticates behind closed lips but displays the process without self-consciousness. Lucy, who is squeamish about such things, glances at him occasionally with scarcely concealed disgust. Brother Bayley eats more sparingly and divides his attention between his food and a printed vocabulary of Kisagara. He has a strong predilection for reading at meals, which ever and again comes under the lash of Ann's tongue. She does not consider it good manners.

John himself makes a hearty breakfast, but glances occasionally at Lucy's silent abstemiousness. At last Ann, the housekeeper, rises after Brothers Bayley and Anderson have left the table for their work, and says to Lucy: "Don't sit too long over your food because I want Priscilla and Florence to clear away, wash up and then come to me. . . ."

She goes out.

"Not well, Lucy, this morning?" says John, who is beginning to despair about her fitting in to mission life. The conviction which he often repels takes him now with an ache. He loves the work himself, not only the converting these savages to a better mode of life, but the unrealized colonization about the whole business, the planting of fruit trees, the increase of flocks and herds, the freedom from civilization's shackles and class distinctions. . . .

"Oh yes! I'm quite well . . . I suppose. Simply not hungry. I daresay I shall make up for it at dinner . . . provided Ann leaves me alone and doesn't

nag about eating. I think it's *such* bad manners, observing what people do at meal times. I don't comment on her big appetite or on Anderson's disgusting way of eating. . . ."

"She means very well," replies John, wishing to be fair. . . .

"I daresay she does. She'd have made you a much better wife than I. If I die in my next attack of fever, you ought to marry her . . . *I* shouldn't mind. . . ."

"Now, Lucy, don't say such dreadful things. You can't think *how* they hurt me. . . ."

At this moment Priscilla and Florence — pronouncing their imposed baptismal names as "Pilisilla," and "Filórency" in a loud stage conversation they are holding together to conceal the fact that they have rapidly escheated a half-basin-full of sugar — come in to clear away, and John leads Lucy with an arm round her waist back to their own quarters.

"Cheer up, old girl! You haven't had fever now for three months and you're getting your good looks back. And making splendid progress with your teaching. . . . You're beginning to master the language. . . ."

It is eleven o'clock in the morning and the Girls' School at Hangodi, with its mud walls of wattle and daub and its thatch of grass and palm mid-ribs, is hot to the extent of eighty degrees Fahrenheit. Despite the open door (for the small glass-paned windows are not made to open) the atmosphere is close and redolent of perspiring Negroes. Lucy raises her eyes from her desk and looks about her as though realizing the scene from a new point of view, without illusion or kindly allowance. At the end of the School-house, opposite to the teacher's platform and desk, is the entrance-door of heavy planks adzed from native timber. Through the wide-open doorway can be seen a square

of sun-baked red clay which refracts a dazzling flame-white effulgence.

When the eye got used to this brilliancy of sunlight on a surface polished by the pattering of naked feet, it could distinguish rows of Eucalyptus saplings, and here and there the rich green of a native shade-tree, together with part of a red brick chapel roofed with corrugated iron and several thatched houses of white-washed clay.

On the walls of the School were hung a map of the World on Mercator's projection and a map of Africa; a large scroll with elementary illustrations of Natural History — typical beasts, birds, reptiles, fish and insects, of sizes as disproportionate as the inhabitants of a Noah's Ark. There were also placards with arithmetical figures, letters of the alphabet and single syllable combinations: *M a, ma; b a, ba; l e, le,* etc. Over the wall, behind the teacher's desk and above the black-board, was a long strip of white paper, printed in big black capitals: MWAACHE WATOTO WANIKARIBU ("Suffer little children to come unto Me"). The words were in the widely understood Swahili language, the medium through which Lucy endeavoured with many difficulties and misunderstandings to impart her knowledge to her semi-savage pupils.

A lull after her two hours' teaching had begun. A Negro woman of some intelligence, a freed slave from Unguja and the wife of "Josaia Birigizi" (Josiah Briggs) the interpreter, was talking in a low sing-song voice with the little girls, practising them in the alphabet and the syllables formed by consonant and vowel. The class, ranged upon rows of rough forms in front of the teacher's desk, consisted of black girls of all sizes, from little children to young, nubile women; but they were separated by an aisle down the middle of the room and were assorted according to height into

two categories, "A-*big*-geru" and "A-*lig*-geru," these phrases being Bantu corruptions of "Big girls," and "Little girls."

Although nearly if not quite naked when at home, here on the Mission premises they were dressed in short-sleeved smocks of white calico, loose from the neck downwards, most of them soiled and in need of washing. The girls consequently had a frowsy look, somewhat belied by their glossy faces and arms, their brilliant eyes, and dazzling white teeth. The smaller children were pretty little things that any teacher might have petted, but most of the bigger girls had an impudent look and an ill-concealed expression of over-fed idleness tending towards imaginings of sensuality. A critic of missionary policy in those days would have felt inclined to put these bigger girls to good, hard, manual labour in the mornings which should by the afternoon have taken the sauciness out of them; and have reserved their mental education for the afternoon, when they had returned from brick-making or field hoeing.

No sooner did Lucy relapse into silence and show signs of reverie than they set to work to whisper of their love affairs, to push and pull one another about with giggles and peevish complaints; or else to let slates fall with a clatter whilst they watched with interest the flitting of rats about the rafters.

Lucy raised her eyes likewise to the roof. Its framework was constructed of the smooth, shiny midribs of palm-fronds, descending from a central ridge-pole below the mud walls and supporting outside a shade over the verandah. Across the palm rafters were laid transverse rows of more or less straight branches or sticks, and to these were attached the round bunches of coarse grass which formed the thatch. From rafters and beams there fell every now and again little wafts of yellowish powder, due to the indus-

trious drilling of the wood by burrowing beetles.

But the thatch was alive with larger things than insects, especially where it came in contact with the top of the clay walls. Here an occasional lizard darted in and out the rafters like a whip, and rats poked out their long faces with quizzical, beady eyes, watching the proceedings below with rat-like impudence.

Teaching had begun at nine, and would go on till lunch-time — twelve. But already by eleven the teacher was weary and could not concentrate her thoughts on the drudgery of getting elementary ideas about reading, spelling and counting into these Palæolithic brains. She fell silent. Her eyes first ranged over the School-house, taking in all its details in a mood of scornful hostility. She had never so completely realized the hatefulness of her present existence and its bitter contrast with her home life in England. She was sick of John's simple piety, of Brother Anderson's sanctimoniousness and disagreeably affectionate manner to herself . . . and his way of eating, his behaviour at table, his unctuous prayers. Mr. Bayley, whose quiet manners and politeness appealed to her, was, nevertheless, fanatical about the letter of Scripture — a bigot, Captain Brentham would have called him. It would not be loyal to her husband — John, at least, was sincere and worked very hard; otherwise what *satirical* letters she could write about it all! . . .

But the one she most disliked among her associates was Ann Jamblin. Ann came between her and John, just as they might have hit it off, have come to some agreement about religion or her own share in Mission work. If Ann had never come out, things might have been more bearable. . . . Ann had come here on a false pretence. She was in love with John, *that* was certain, though John was too much of a goose to see it.

Certainly she had made herself useful, *odiously* useful. . . . The men liked her because she made them so comfortable. . . . That talent, of course, was inherited from the ham and beef shop at home! She shared Lucy's teaching work and taught the women and girls in the afternoon — taught them sensible things — cooking, plain sewing, washing, ironing, leaving to Lucy — as she pretended — the " fine lady " part of the work, the instruction of their minds.

Lucy's eyes flashed in her day-dream when she realized how she had grown to loathe the morning and evening prayers. . . . Brother Anderson's contribution to the uplifting of the spirit, especially. *How* weary was the Sunday with its two " native " services, both conducted by John in English, broken Swahili, and Kagulu, with the long-drawn-out interpretation of Josiah Briggs.

She had had good health since she reached Hangodi, after that ghastly nightmare journey from the coast. That was fortunate, because the nearest medical help was fifty miles away. But *oh!* the monotony of the life! How much longer could she stand it? It was not so bad for the men. Every Saturday they took a whole holiday and went down to the lower country and shot game and guinea-fowl for the food of the station. Sometimes they " itinerated " and she and Ann were left alone. John always asserted it was not safe for white women to travel, except to and from the coast. With much camp life he believed they became unwomanly. . . .

There had only been three mails since she had arrived last July. Captain Brentham sent her books and newspapers, but Ann tossed her head over these attentions and John once or twice confiscated the books as being of dangerous tendencies; subversive of a simple faith. The station itself was provided with little else to read except the Bible, a few goody-goody books and

magazines, grammars and dictionaries of native languages.

In England she had imagined she was going to sketch and botanize, collect butterflies, and keep all sorts of wonderful pets, besides beholding superb scenery and meeting every now and then celebrated explorers. That dream had soon passed away. She had no time for sketching in the week, and it was considered wrong to do it on a Sunday. And even if she outraged the sentiment of the community and sat down with her sketch-block and water colours before a flowering tree or a striking view, ants came up and bit her, midges attacked her face till it was puffed out, or the sun was too hot or the wind too boisterous. As to botanizing, there was certainly splendid forest — with tree-ferns and orchids — higher up the Ulunga mountains, but it was pronounced unsafe to botanize there except in a party. There were snakes, or leopards, or lurking warriors of unfriendly tribes. . . .

Her thoughts then turned to the homeland. . . . Presently she was back in the scenes she had left nearly a year ago. . . . She saw herself walking slowly from Aldermaston village up the road to Mortimer, her father's farmhouse just left behind. She stopped to greet old Miss Fanning, who inhabited the rather monastic-looking school-teacher's house by a special concession, as Lucy — her successor — lived with her parents hard by. The children of the village were playing games with the pupil teacher in the large grassy yard. She could see quite distinctly the rustic shed which surrounded two sides of the playground — like the verandah of an African house. In her day-dream the children, blue-eyed, flaxen-haired, seemed to greet her. They were so fond of her — How *could* she have left them? . . . Then in imagination she was farther along the Mortimer road, past the high brick wall of Aldermaston Park. Lordly blue-green cedars topped the

wall of mellow brick. Then when the wall turned off to the right it was succeeded by a high bank and hedge as the road mounted and rose above the river valley. She could see, oh! with such detail, the soft green fern-fronds of the bank. Above the male ferns grew a row of hart's-tongue. Above that, here and there a foxglove, tufts of bell heather and where the hedge lowered and you could see into spaces of the oak wood, there were brakes of French willow herb in pink blossom. . . .

What a series of pictures now passed before her mental vision as instinctively she closed her eyes to Africa, to her silent, observant class, who thought that she was dozing! White ducks on a wayside pond, set in a crescent of duckweed; clipped and shaven yews in front of an old brick-and-timber cottage with a steep thatched roof; an upland hayfield, sturdy, wholesome men with frank blue eyes and brawny arms of beefy red; long-horned cattle with a make-believe fierceness which had never imposed on her, standing in the shade of elms and whisking flies from off their red flanks and cream bellies; her mother's garden, gay with phlox, sweet peas and pansies, and scented with dark red roses. . . . Oh, *why* had she ever left her mother, left her pleasant tranquil work at the National school to join John out in East Africa? It was vanity, partly; wishing to get married; wishing to travel. . . . For the evangelizing of Africa she had ceased to care since her talks with Captain Brentham—"Roger," she called him to herself—and still more since she had come to know Africa. . . . But "Roger"—Well, if she hadn't come out to Africa she would certainly never have had the opportunity to know *him* . . . on that steamer voyage!

Lucy's thoughts were abruptly brought back to Eastern Africa and discipline in her school class; for a too venturesome rat, darting up a rafter, had lost

his footing and fallen plop amongst the girls — the "Big-geru," and they, upsetting forms and throwing away slates, had flung themselves in a struggling heap on the spot where the rat had landed. From out of the *mêlée* one triumphant young woman rose up, with her smock torn from top to bottom, but holding up a damaged, dying rat by its broken tail. A loud clamour of voices disputing the fairness of the capture and the answering shrieks of the capturer, secure in the possession of her prize (which she would shortly eat broiled over the ashes as a relish to her sorghum porridge), roused Lucy to a show of anger which stilled the tumult and turned the girls' attention to their teacher. She, standing up and trying to stammer out in Swahili words of adequate reproof, realized still more vividly the dreariness of her present lot, and bursting into an agony of tears, buried her head in her arms over the desk.

The little children gazed at her grief, awe-struck. Could rich, god-like white people have any sorrow, when they might wear cloth to any extent and had white salt in bottles and delicious foods in tins? Propelled by Josiah's wife they stole away wondering; and the "Big-geru" left the school gracelessly, with loud laughs and free comments in Kagulu on the white woman's show of emotion. The schoolroom clock ticked on, the rats, emboldened, rushed about the thatch and dropped without mishap on the floor, whence they scuttled out on to the verandah, then up the posts and so into the roof again. The flame-white sunlight grew fiercer in the square, the shadows of the trees shorter and more purple. At last a loud bell clanged, and presently Ann Jamblin looked in and said with a shade of insolence as she passed on: "The luncheon bell, Lucy."

Lucy affected not to hear her, but hurriedly dabbed her tear-stained face with a handkerchief, shook her

white dress tidy, smoothed her hair with a hand-touch here and there, and took down a book from a shelf as if to study. . . .

Her husband stood at the doorway.

"Luncheon's ready, dear. . . . Have the girls been unruly this morning?"

"Thank you, I'm not hungry. Don't wait lunch for me. I dare say I shan't want anything till tea-time. . . . The girls? Oh! Not worse than usual. I have no influence with them. . . . It's my fault, of course. I was never cut out for this work. Please, *please* don't wait. . . . I suppose it isn't part of one's Christian duty to eat when you aren't hungry? . . ."

John Baines looked downcast . . . and went out to the lunch of roast kid or roast guinea-fowl, sweet potatoes, boiled plantains, and banana fritters in syrup of sugar-cane, with less appetite than usual.

Lucy meantime tries to pretend she is interested in a book. It is far too hot to walk out and botanize. And then, what is the use of pressing these plants? The colour of the gorgeous petals soon fades to brown, fungi and minute insects attack them and they crumble into dust; and the Mission objects to all the blotting-paper being used up in this way. . . .

Presently John returns; with a native servant carrying a tray on which are tea things, slices of guinea-fowl breast, some boiled sweet potatoes, and banana fritters. To obtain this rather tempting little meal he has had to face the scornful opposition of Ann Jamblin, but for once he has turned on her (to the silent dismay of Bros. Bayley and Anderson). "Ann," he has said, "you must learn to keep your tongue and temper under control. It is you who drive Lucy away from our meals by your constant fault-finding. We are not all made alike; some of us are more sensitive than others." Ann, strange to say, is silenced by his sharp tone and makes no retort.

"Come, Lucy," he said, after the little meal has been placed on the table by her desk; "you will only make yourself ill by this refusal to eat. I am sorry Ann has been so teasing. I have spoken to her. Now try to eat this little lunch whilst we are quiet in here."

Lucy looks at it and at him. In the middle of the tray is an enamelled iron tumbler containing a small bunch of mallow flowers with large lemon-tinted petals and a vivid mauve centre. This, from John, means so much, as a concession to her tastes. She bursts into tears — at this period she was very soppy!

"Oh, John! You *are* good to me. I really *don't* deserve such kindness. I have been a *dreadful* disappointment to you."

"Well; eat up the lunch and you'll make me happy," says poor John. "Why shouldn't we *all* be happy here, Lucy?" he goes on. "The Lord has singularly blessed our work; the climate — for Africa — is not at all bad; you can't say the scenery is ugly, there are beautiful flowers all around — and — and ferns. We're getting on well with the people, much better than I ever expected. Why, your schoolroom is already too small for the numbers and Bayley has to teach his classes out of doors in the 'baraza.' Look at our plantations — how the lemon trees and oranges are growing — and the coffee. It's true we get our mails rather seldom. There seems to be something queer going on at the coast. The carriers can't get through. . . . The Germans, I suspect. But we're safe and snug enough here. As for me, I don't want to hear from home. Mother's letters are not precisely cheering. I only ask to go on with the Lord's work without interruption. *Do* try to be cheerful, darling . . . do you think you — Do you think there is — er — any hope of — your ——?"

"I *will* try once more, John. But couldn't we live more by ourselves? Ann gets on my nerves, do what

I will. Couldn't we do our own housekeeping?" continues Lucy, clasping her hands and looking at him pleadingly.

"Well," said John, a little ruefully, "you know you *did* try for a month after you first came, but it was such a failure that you gave it up. You couldn't stand the heat of the cookhouse, or manage the cook, or do the accounts in calico for the things you bought. And — you don't know much about cooking. Why should you? You're a first-class teacher. And then, you know, you were so set at first on studying — studying botany — and painting pictures. I thought, even, you might write for the Mission Magazine, like Mrs. Lennox and Mrs. Baxter. . . ."

Lucy: "But they always want you to write goody goody and bring in the Lord at every turn and make out the black people to be quite different from what they are — Somehow I couldn't fall in with their style, it's so humbugging ——"

John: "Well, then, write for other magazines, worldly ones if you like. I'm sure you could write well — you used to make up beautiful poetry before we were married, and you've had thrilling enough experiences on the way up. It isn't every missionary's wife who's had a lion trying to get into her tent ——"

Lucy: "The thought of *that* journey *still* makes me sick. And yet I used to think I should adore African travel —" (An ungrateful thought flashed through her mind: "so I should, with — with — some people"). "Besides, if I told the true story — bugs, ants, snakes, rotting corpses, and all — it might stop other missionary women from coming out. No. I can't write anything. I *do* make collections of flowers, but you won't let me go far from the Station to botanize and you're always too busy to come with me. As to painting, it's either too wet, or too hot, or too something. And then you hinted once I shouldn't take a

half-holiday every day but help some one else in their work, so I give up some of my time to Mr. Bayley. . . . No, I won't call him 'Brother Bayley,' it's so *silly,* all this brother and sister business"— (a short pause and a sudden impulse). "John! Couldn't you take me home next dry season — and get them to give you work at home —? Or" (noting his look of dismay) "send me home to Mother and join me there later on, when your leave is due? . . ."

John: "It would just *break my heart* either to part with you or to throw up my missionary career. . . ."

Lucy: "Well, then, could I go on an itinerary — as you call it — with you? Not be cooped up here with that intolerable Ann when you three men go off on a round of preaching. I'd promise not to mind anything — snakes, ants, lions, or even the Masai. Perhaps I might get to enjoy Africa that way without all this intolerable religion. . . ."

John: "*Lucy!* . . ."

Lucy: "I didn't mean to shock you again, but I couldn't help it. I don't know what's come over me, but I've grown to *hate* religion, and still more pretending to be religious. I'm sick of the Bible . . . at least I mean of the Old Testament. It always makes me think of some wearisome old grandmother who says the same thing over and over again. . . . Who wrote it? That's what *I* want to know. How do we know the old Jews didn't make it up and pretend it was inspired?" (John ejaculates a "*Lucy!*" of protest at intervals, but she is so carried away by a desire to express her revolt that she pays no heed.) "You know I've been trying to help Mr. Bayley in his translations by reading slowly bits of the Bible — just now we're in Exodus. He *would* begin at Genesis, even though I said all the people wanted was the Gospels — I don't think I ever studied the Bible much at home and it all comes fresh to me as though I had never

thought about it before. . . . Well, Exodus. . . . Have you ever read those chapters where Moses fasted — or said he fasted — for forty days *and* nights *without food or even water* whilst he was writing down God's sayings? . . . How silly some of them sound. . . . How particular the Almighty seemed about the colours of the tabernacle curtains — blue, purple, and scarlet — and about the snuffers and the snuff-dishes being made of pure gold. And about the 'knops.' . . . What is a 'knop'? Poor Mr. Bayley can't find the word in any dictionary. What can be the good of translating all this into Kagulu? It only puzzles the natives, Josiah told me. Mr. Bayley's always losing his temper with Josiah because he can't find the right Gulu or even Swahili word for some of these things in Exodus. Surely all you want to teach them is simple Christianity and how to live less like pigs and more like decent human beings. . . ."

John (interposing at last, after he has cast his counter argument into words): "How can you teach them about Christ without first explaining what led up to Christ, the Fall and the Redemption? We want to give them the whole Bible, even if we don't understand every passage ourselves. Every word of the Bible is inspired." (Lucy makes a mute protest.) "But oh! my Lucy . . . what I feared and foretold has come to pass. This coquetting with Science has cost you your faith. Kneel down." (She knelt with him unwillingly on the little platform.)

"Oh Lord," prayed John, most earnestly, "visit Thine handmaid in her sore need for Thy help! Dispel her doubts with the sunshine of — of — Thy grace. Convince her of Thine Almighty Power and Wisdom and consecrate her to Thy service in this Heathen Land."

They rose to their feet constrainedly. John covertly flicked the dust from his trousers, blew his nose, and

wiped eyes suffused with emotion. Lucy impatiently shook her white skirt. How she hated these impromptu genuflections which always shortened the wearing life of the skirt and sent it prematurely to the wash. And much washing made it shrink so.

Still, her passion was spent and she felt very, very sorry for her husband, and a little guilty in her discontent. If she had come out straight to him from England under no other influence, would she not have been a fairer critic, have taken more kindly to mission work? And was not John really cut out for a missionary, with every reason to be proud of his station's success?

These silent musings, while John awkwardly hummed a hymn tune, were broken in upon by the strident voice and bustling presence of Ann Jamblin. "Well, then, young people" (being three years older than they were she sometimes assumed a maternal air), "if you've finished honeymooning, I'll take the tray away and get the school ready for my sewing class." (To one without: "Pilisilla! Ring the bell three times.")

They left the School-house without answering her, hand in hand. Lucy felt so sorry for John that she resolved once more to try to be a missionary's wife and helpmeet. The intense heat of the forenoon was breeding a thunderstorm, and already the sky was overcast, and a few puffs of cool air were blowing up from the plains. Presently these grew into an alarming dust-storm, a hurricane which blew Bayley's proofs and manuscript to right and left; and when Lucy rushed in to pick them up she was blinded for a minute by the glare of lightning. Then the wind dropped before a deluge — a grey, sweeping deluge of rain. In trying to save this and that, Lucy and Ann were drenched to the skin and had to change their soaking garments. The change to dry clothes, the rub down

somehow cheered them, and made them more friendly. Lucy then returned to Bayley's study and once more helped him in the returning daylight with his translations. But he was now well into Leviticus, and some passages proved so embarrassing to both Lucy and Josiah that the former broke off with the exclamation, "It's teatime."

And sure enough there sounded the one pleasant summons in the twenty-four hours: the tea bell.

The rain had ceased, the darkness had lifted for a while and left the western sky a sweet lemon yellow, out of which a tempered sunlight twinkled. The air had become fresh and uplifting in a dying breeze. The little party met round the tea-table in a mood to jest and to be friendly. Ann, more good-humoured than usual, described her sousing. She also told Lucy she had had two of Lucy's skirts mended at her sewing lesson, to save her the trouble. Oh, it was all right; they had served as a pattern.

A couple of armed porters arrived during teatime, their calico clothing still adhering to their brown bodies from the rain storm through which they had stolidly walked. They had not brought the regular "Europe" mail from Unguja, but some parcels from Mr. Callaway and local letters. These read aloud over the tea-table spoke of the restlessness of the coast population caused by the administration of the German Company, of Arab gossip at Unguja, of the sombre news from Nyasaland where a Scottish trading Company was at open war with the Arabs, in trying to defend the population from Arab slave raids. Tiputipu was away on the Congo looking for Stanley and had withdrawn his restraining influence from the Tanganyika Arabs. Was a concerted Arab attack on the interfering white man about to begin? The missionaries looked from one to the other a little anxiously. A growing feeling of *camaraderie* linked them. They felt themselves to

be an outpost of Christianity in a world threatened by the Moslem. They congratulated John in that he had so completely won over the Ulunga chief, Mbogo, that the latter had expelled the Arab traders from his hill country and made common cause with the White man. . . .

At dinner — or as they better styled it, supper — they were quite cheerful. There was even a special zest in the evening service, point and *vim* in the shortened prayers. Ann was congratulated by Lucy on her ground-nut soup and "pepperpot"; and the treacle pudding which followed was declared a masterpiece.

John that night kissed his wife tenderly in mute recognition of her more sympathetic attitude. . . . She did not shrink as usual from his caresses.

CHAPTER X

ROGER ARRIVES

SIR JAMES ECCLES, it was decided, was not to return to Unguja to guide once more the destinies of East Africa. Prince Bismarck would not hear of it. After considerable hesitation Sir Godfrey Dewburn, K.C.I.E., was appointed to succeed him in the spring of 1888 and arrived at Unguja to take up his position as Agent and Consul-General when Roger Brentham had about completed a year's tenure of the post in an " acting " capacity.

Sir Godfrey Dewburn was a fortunate Irish soldier, who — because he had a capacity for getting on well with everybody — had held a high administrative position in India, though outside the ranks of the Indian Civil Service. He did well over the Prince of Wales's visit in organizing successful durbars, nautch dances and perfect shooting picnics, in which record tigers were bagged. He did better still in an aftermath of the Imperial visit, when the Duke of Ulster and the Hereditary Prince of Baden came out to shoot in Dewburn's new province. He had also married, with very wise prevision, a daughter of the Choselwhit who was legal adviser to the Circumlocution Office. When it was felt that Sir James Eccles must be thrown over to avoid a breach with Germany, which threatened a Franco-Germano-Russian alliance against us, somebody — perhaps the Duke of Ulster, who still remembered Dewburn's champagne cup, cooled with the snows of the Himalaya and tendered just at the psychological moment when the most splendid of the tigers had fallen

to the Royal rifle — suggested Dewburn for the post. And as he was backed up by the India Office, who wanted to weed their Civil Service of outsiders, and by Molyneux who thought Dewburn's dinners at the "Rag" quite the best in London, Lord Wiltshire, tired and preoccupied over the Parnell letters, gave way and appointed Dewburn. Lord Silchester's suggestion of Brentham was deemed "indelicate," emphasized as it was by Sibyl, to whom Lord Wiltshire had taken a whimsical dislike.

Dewburn, when he came out, posed as a jolly good fellow who praised every one all round and enchanted Mrs. Bazzard by his manners and easy cordiality. But after a bit, Brentham's efficiency got on his nerves. It was irritating to hear his subordinate — so much better fitted than he for the post, some might have said — prattling and swearing in Swahili and Unguja Arabic, and rather markedly doing without an interpreter. Dewburn spoke French well and a little bad Hindustani, but there his linguistics ended; and his brain sutures being closed would admit no knowledge of an African tongue.

Then there was Spencer Bazzard always at hand, serviceable unto servility, ready to jot inspirations and judgments down on a writing-pad with some prehistoric form of the fountain-pen or indelible pencil, and reproduce these utterances afterwards, conveniently elaborated. Brentham, on the other hand, preferred putting in a draft of his own, which took quite an independent line and might have led H.M. Government to do something, make up their minds to some definite course. . . .

Then again, Brentham's real destination was the German mainland. . . . The situation there was strained. . . .

Mrs. Bazzard somehow amused and intrigued Sir Godfrey (Lady Dewburn had not yet arrived). He

guessed her as somewhat of a demi-rep, but to him, as to me, such a person is more interesting to study than the simple village maiden, or the clergyman's daughter with her smooth hair parted in the middle. . . .

Who precisely were the Bazzards? May I, with a novelist's omniscience, clear up the mystery?

There was a celebrated firm of solicitors in Staple Inn known as Grewgious and Bazzard. It had originated in a Mr. Hiram Grewgious, who had a valuable Norfolk connexion and had figured with some distinction and celebrity in a famous Kentish murder trial in the early 'sixties. The junior partner, Mr. Bazzard, took over the business from Mr. Grewgious, and when the latter died in 1878 still preserved the honoured style of the firm. This Mr. Bazzard led a double life, in that he was not only a particularly astute solicitor, but also a playwright of ability who produced at least two stirring melodramas under a *nom de plume*.

As solicitor he had lifted Mr. Bennet Molyneux once out of a considerable difficulty and delicate dilemma . . . he had ascertained that the lady was travelling under an assumed name and . . . in short, he had settled the affair without any fuss, and Molyneux was thoroughly grateful and asked him to dine at the Travellers, giving, of course, due notice, so that the guest-room, in those distant days with its settees thick with dust, might be got ready, and a fire be lit to take off the chill.

Over walnuts and port, Mr. Bazzard had mentioned the existence of a much-younger brother — fifteen years younger, in point of fact — rather at a loose end since he was called to the Bar — clever chap withal, steady, married now to a deuced pretty woman, but in his youth the very devil with the sex. ("Just so," would nod Mr. Molyneux comprehendingly, who, except for the most pardonable slip with Mrs. —— at

Lucerne, was a blameless husband and father.) Well, then, there he was — had tried ranching in the States and buying horses in the Argentine, got done in the eye by that scoundrel, Bax Strangeways — knew a lot about the tropics — stand any climate — take on any job. In short, did Mr. Molyneux know of an opening anywhere in Africa, C.O. or F.O., for a sporting chap with a knowledge of Law?

And Bennet had put down his name for a vacancy in the East African Consular service. And having thus taken him under his wing, was prepared to stand by him through thick and thin . . . even deluded himself into thinking he was a damned good sort, and his golden-haired wife —" bit of the devil in her, no doubt "— a fit person for Mrs. Molyneux to know — in the country, at any rate.

Perhaps she was. Why should one sneer at a woman for trying to improve her position and looks and wriggle into a less sordid sphere than that in which she was brought up? Emilia Standish — christened Emily, of course, but wrote her name " Emilia " from the time she was seventeen — was, as Captain Brentham ill-naturedly guessed, the daughter of a Bayswater widow who kept a Bayswater boarding-house (few districts of London have such a power for moulding human beings to its guise). Emilia Standish — or was it Stapleton? — I really forget — had tried life as a governess with ill success. She confided to her mother, and her mother only, that she might have succeeded here or there had not her pupil's father made improper advances from which she had to flee. She had studied for the stage, but like her predestined fate, Spencer Bazzard, she, at thirty-two, was somewhat at a loose end and living at home when Spencer came to lodge at her mother's boarding-house. He was down on his luck, almost in hiding, nearly cast

off by his highly respectable, much older brother. He fell ill. Emilia took pity on him, nursed him, and defied her mother over the financial question. Out of gratitude he proposed. She accepted him and took stock of the situation, called on the elder brother in Staple Inn, secured his advocacy for a "colonial" appointment — and — you know the rest.

Spencer can't have been wholly bad, because though they had many a private tiff and unheard wrangle, this woman stuck by him and made a career for him. Brentham, in writing to his sister, gave too unfair a description of Spencer. He omitted to notice that though his knowledge of law was so imperfect as to throw doubt on the efficacy of the examinations which then admitted to the Bar, he had at any rate acquired some knowledge of shorthand, and certain of the qualities necessary to playing private secretary to an important personage. So that Sir Godfrey preferred greatly the retention of Bazzard as his lieutenant at Unguja, rather than the slightly gloomy and excessively well-informed Brentham.

There came at this time rumour after rumour that the Arabs of the Zangian coast were preparing to rise in force not only against the Germans but against all white men. They were concerting measures in common with the Arabs of Mombasa, of Tanganyika, Nyasa and the Upper Congo to expel all white men from East Africa and found a great Slave-holding empire which might link up with the victoriously anti-European Mahdi of the Sudan. Sir Godfrey Dewburn did not clothe his Memorandum of instructions to Brentham in exactly these comprehensive and grandiloquent terms, derived from a contemporaneous essay of my own, but he said:

"Look here, dear old chap. You know you are a bit of the fifth wheel to the coach here, on this potty

little island. You've put me up to all the ropes, I'm well in the saddle. Now suppose you cut along to your own show? The mainland, hey? Go and round up those blasted Germans, don't you know? Of course, steer clear of quarrels — that'd never do. Be coldly polite, but see what they're up to and report to me — fully. Strikes me it's blowing up for a storm. . . ."

So Brentham shipped himself and his indispensable retinue of Goanese cook, Swahili butler, and a nucleus of fifteen always dependable gunmen-porters of the stalwart Unyamwezi breed over to Medinat-al-barkah — the "Town of Blessings," on the Zangian coast: formerly the chief shipping port of slaves and now the head-quarters of the German Chartered Company which had succeeded to the authority of the Sultan of Unguja.

A few months afterwards, when he had organized a Consulate and an Indian clerical staff in an adapted, cleansed, and tidied Arab house, he received an urgent and confidential communication from Sir Godfrey:

"The F.O. is much perturbed by the reports of Arab risings against the German Company. Mvita seems to be quiet under Mackenzie. The various missionary societies are clamouring for information and some indication that H.M.G. realizes the seriousness of the situation. I have been instructed semi-officially by H. and M. that you should at once proceed inland with a sufficiently strong caravan and visit the missionary stations within a radius of — say — three hundred miles of Medina, assisting the white people to repair to safe positions on the coast, especial care being taken to bring away their women and children. You know far better what to do than I, who am a new comer to East Africa. So, *carte blanche*. Do your best. Good luck and chin-chin.

"Lady Dewburn, who has just come out, is dying to put her feet on a maned lion skin when she gets out of

bed. So if you've any luck shooting, 'Then *you'll* remember me!'

"Yours,

"GODFREY DEWBURN."

In consequence of these instructions you can picture such events as these occurring at the end of September, 1888.

Lucy Baines, attended by Josiah Briggs's wife Halima, was taking the air on the outskirts of Hangodi. She had had a baby in the previous July, and was still weak and anæmic. The confinement had been a difficult one, as it was a little premature, owing to Lucy having been frightened by a hyena. A medical missionary had been in hurried attendance, and kind Mrs. Stott had come fifty miles to act as an amateur midwife. But the child died soon after its birth, and Lucy, for the first fortnight, had been delirious. If her child had lived her whole outlook might have changed and brightened. As it was ——

John had rigged up a kind of machila — I can't explain a second time what a machila is — a compromise between a palanquin and a hammock — and this could be taken out on short journeys by two strong porters. With this and her pupil-teacher, Halima, in attendance, Lucy was wont to make little afternoon pilgrimages along the red paths on the outskirts of the Hangodi plateau.

At this and that shady spot she would leave her machila languidly, sit on a camp stool and pick flowers and examine them: or she would practise her Swahili and Kagulu with Halima and question this woman — greatly devoted to her — on native manners and customs, or native legends. The two porters would squat at a respectful distance, or if told they would not be wanted for half an hour, would stroll off to the nearest native village.

On this particular day in September they came running back in great excitement to say a white man's *safari* was approaching. It could be seen in the plain below . . . quite a small army of black men headed by one white man, coming in single file over the burnt grass.

Rumour had flown ahead of it . . . as it did in Africa, in pre-telegraph days. The white man was a great English consul coming to make a treaty with Ulunga, or coming to fight the Arabs, or to turn the Wa-dachi out of the country and to place Nguru under the Woman chief of the English. Mbogo the chief had already run up his English flag. . . .

Lucy's heart stood still and she sat on her camp stool too much overcome to remain standing. Could it . . . be . . . Roger?

Halima fumbled in her basket and produced a restorative. Presently Lucy rose to her feet and said in a decisive tone:

"Take me to meet the white man. . . ."

They met about three miles from the Mission Station. Seeing the machila approaching, heralded by the boastful singing of its carriers, anxious to do their mistress honour, Brentham had got off his riding donkey and handed it to a follower carrying his sporting rifle. He walked to meet the unknown person swaying in the jaunty advance of the delighted porters. The machila stopped. Lucy emerged from it, then overcome with dizziness sank down by the wayside. Quickly he had raised her, unthinkingly and instinctively their arms were round each other. . . . "My dearest girl! You are safe then? Your station has not been attacked?"

"My darling *Roger!* you have come for me . . . take, oh, *take* me away!"

Thus they spoke instinctively in continuation of thoughts long sanctioned by their inner consciousness,

but never outwardly expressed. There were no listeners who could understand what the avowals meant. Nevertheless they hastened to resume a correct parlance as between old acquaintances and nothing more.

"I think," said Lucy, "you had better send one or two spare men on ahead with a brief note to my husband saying you will be arriving at our station in about an hour, that you met me on the road and will bring me on with you. This will give our people time to — to — plan where to put you all. There won't be room for everybody inside the stockade. Then when you've sent off the note we can rest for half an hour or so in that piece of shade, where there are the euphorbias and the fig trees, and I shan't feel quite so shaky. I've been rather ill — I'll tell you all about it when you've sent off the note."

Roger scribbled the message on a leaf out of his road-book.

"There is our station," said Lucy, "about two miles off, on that great spur that comes out from the mountain. You can see the white houses and the red brick chapel and the glint of the corrugated iron. And away to the — well, I s'pose it's the south — is the chief Mbogo's principal village — all those little brown huts. . . ."

The two impatient messengers scarcely waited for this information but bounded off to deliver their message and find some resting-place for the caravan, extenuated as it was with the long, hot march.

Lucy took Roger's arm — how it thrilled her, how like an impossible dream come true! — and followed by Halima and the machila reached the patch of blue shade made by a group of candelabra euphorbias and fig trees with thick glossy leaves and pendent branches. The ground underneath was absolutely clear of any cover for snakes and was whitish with the ashes of many a cooking fire, lit here by caravans arriving at

evening and preferring to postpone their interviews with Chief Mbogo — sometimes a rapacious gentleman over his dues — till the morning light.

Whilst Brentham's cook was preparing a cup of tea, Lucy poured forth tumultuously her story of the chief happenings of the past six months. Brentham said in reply that she must have gone through a beastly time; but she might now take heart. He had come with definite instructions to take her away to the coast and her husband too, if the men-folk agreed. "Any other English woman at the station?" he inquired.

Lucy told him there was Ann Jamblin, but did not think the present moment the right one in which to expatiate on the irritating side of Ann's disposition. Moreover now that she was going back to England, why run down Ann? If Ann stayed behind, as she was convinced she would do, she might be a great comfort to John. "Don't think it odd of me," finished Lucy, "if when we reach the station I go straight to my house and to bed. I feel really too much shaken to take part in any discussion. I would much sooner you settled everything with John. I'm sure he won't oppose my going."

When Brentham reached Hangodi he was introduced to Ann, who listened to his polite phrases rather impatiently and seemed a little incredulous about any danger from Arab attacks. What exercised her mind, she said frankly, was how to keep the hundred men of his caravan from too close contact with her twenty or thirty maidens who lived in — what it was hoped was —" maiden meditation, fancy free," within the stockaded boundaries of the Mission Station. The local young manhood of the near-by Ulunga villages was supposed to stand too much in awe of Ann and to obey too strictly their chief's prohibition of interference with the young women of the Mission to annoy them with any amorous advances; but already Ann

thought she had seen bold glances cast at her pupils — whom she was training to be Christian wives of Christian husbands — by the love-famished stalwarts of the caravan; and a coy recognition of this admiration on the part of the plump "Big-geru." To ease her apprehensions the men were soon all drafted off to billets in the native villages a mile away. To Brentham and his personal servants were alotted the Boys' School and the Chapel for their accommodation, the Consul being told that under all the circumstances of his visit there could be no thought of sacrilege in his using the House of God as a dwelling-place.

Brentham had told them as soon as he arrived that he was charged with instructions to escort all the white *personnel* of Hangodi to some safe place on the coast whilst this war between Arabs and Germans was going on. He had started from Medinat-al-barkah and had with great difficulty and by making the utmost use of the British flag and of the presence of British war vessels off the coast, pushed his way past the insurgent Arabs and Waswahili that were attacking the German strongholds.

By forced marches he had reached the mission stations of Uluguru and Usagara, and had advised the retreat of the older men and all the white women towards the Kilwa coast, not at present in revolt. He left them still undecided whether or not to take his advice, but he had furnished them with a reinforcement of porters and arms.

There was no time to lose, so he was now hurrying on to Ulunga and Ugogo to put the same proposition before the members of the East African Mission, except that the safest route to the coast must now be a great détour towards Kilimanjaro.

Whatever the men decided to do, the women should at any rate come away with him. He would proceed westward and try to pick up the Stotts; then with his

stout-hearted Wanyamwezi soldier-porters they would all find a way round the routes and villages dominated by the Arabs and Wangwana [1] and reach the coast at Mvita, where there was a British Consulate and where British gunboats were lying off the Arab town. But time was precious. Already he had heard that bands of plundering Wangwana and Ruga-ruga [2] were approaching Ugogo from the west.

"How long can you give us?" said the anguished John, torn between his sense of duty regarding his wife and his extreme reluctance to abandon his Mission Station to certain destruction.

"Well, not more than forty-eight hours."

"Brethren," said John, "we must meet in conference and decide this. Sister Lucy has retired to bed — I advised her to do so. She has left it to me to settle what she had better do. But for the rest of us, let us meet after supper in the mess house and talk it over. You, sir," he said, to the worn and weary-looking Brentham — who, whatever he might appear in Lucy's eyes as paladin and parfit gentill knight, was streaked with black and brown after having ridden and walked through the charred herbage of the burnt plains still smoking with their dry-season bush fires —"You, sir, would like a rest and a wash and a meal. Shall I show you your quarters? . . ."

When the little party met in conclave, how unreal the threat of war and violence seemed! The open square of the station was bathed in silver moonlight from a moon three-quarters full; there was the distant twanging of a native guitar played by some musical

[1] Wangwana was the general term in the East African interior by which the "Black Arabs," the Muhammadan Arabized negroes, were known.

[2] Ruga-ruga was the name given to war-like negroes — not necessarily Muhammadans, armed by the Arabs with flint-lock guns and sent to raid and ravish those tribes which rebelled against the slave-traders.

porter; a village dog sent up a complacent howl or two; a goat-sucker churred; a laugh came from the Big-geru's quarters.

John, not without a hope the Consul might be exaggerating their danger, said: "Brethren and Sister Jamblin, each of you shall speak in turn, but as I am regarded as your leader I will give my opinion first. I have decided that my wife shall leave with the Consul for the coast, perhaps even for England, unless she recovers her health and things quiet down. Cruelly hard as it is for me to part with her, I feel it is the right thing to do. As for me, it is also the right thing that I should stop here till all danger is over and my place can be taken by some one else. Sister Jamblin must go with Lucy." (Ann murmured she would do nothing of the kind.) "Yes, Ann; I must insist. Lucy could not possibly travel alone — it is not to be thought of. . . ."

Ann: "Why, she can take Halima ——"

"I say," continued John, wiping the perspiration from his heated face, "it is not to be thought of. As an unmarried woman, Ann, you could not remain here with us men ——" (Ann: "Pooh, nonsense!") "Supposing we were really attacked by the Arabs and we men were killed, I dare not think what might be your fate! Brother Bayley, what do you say?"

Bayley: "Why, that I'll stay with you."

Anderson: "And I say the same. You've both spoken like jolly good Englishmen. And — er — let's trust in the Lord, brethren. *He'll* see us through, He won't leave His servants in the lurch. To think of all the work we've put into this place and all the money what's been spent on it! What are we going to do with our trade goods if we cut and run? The Consul can't load himself up with them — and our ivory and gum copal . . ."

Brentham: "I might mention here I can only spare

about twenty-five porters for the whole five of you. We must travel as lightly as possible, especially if the Stotts want help. They have young children, I believe."

Anderson: "Then I vote we stop. Let the women go. It wouldn't be right to expose them to the risk. . . . Ann, what do you say?"

Ann: "I say this. Let Sister Baines go to the coast. She's always ailing and would only be a drag on us if we were hard-pressed. But for my part I stay with the men, at any rate till things have calmed down. *I'm* not afraid. I'll soon learn to handle a rifle, and I'm pretty good at dressing wounds. And there's my class of girls. It'd pretty nigh break my heart if I went away and they came to grief after all that training I've given them — to make them good wives some day."

John (shortly and decidedly): "You can't remain. I've already told you why. In this matter you must bow to my authority. Lucy in any case is too ill to stay here — under these circumstances — and it is common humanity that you should not let her travel alone to the coast. When our anxiety is over, you and she can come back. . . ." (Ann: "Thank you for nothing!") "Well, sir, you shall know our definite decision in the morning. Meantime you must be tired, very tired indeed. We thank you heartily for coming to our assistance. I'm sure you'd like now to retire." (Brentham withdraws.) "Brethren, before we separate let us put our case before God, that He may guide us aright. . . ."

The next morning the decisive answer tendered to the Consul was that the men would remain and defend their station. Sisters Baines and Jamblin should return to the coast with Consul Brentham.

Lucy forgot all about her anæmia and weak back

and tendency to dizziness in an excited packing up of necessaries for the journey. She would not have to take with her more than her clothes and a few invalid's provisions and appliances. She felt terribly elated, wildly happy at times. No thought of danger entered her head — how could it, with Roger as escort? At the same time, the sight of poor John's silent grief — too deep for words — smote her with reproachfulness; and Ann's scornful observation of her moments of sparkling gaiety seemed sinister.

The situation was eased by Brentham taking John away for three hours to confer with Chief Mbogo and his counsellors. Mbogo was sure he could drive off any number of Arabs or Wangwana if they came to attack his villages or the Mission Station. He would send out word to the Masai. The Masai were now his friends through the peace-making of the missionaries: they hated the Arabs and the "coast people," and said they would side with the Whites. At the same time he accepted gratefully Brentham's present of ten Snider rifles and two loads of ammunition. Another ten rifles and a thousand rounds of ammunition were added to the armoury of the Mission Station, as well as two revolvers, one of which Ann took over, for her own defence on the road or that of her "Biggeru."

Brentham also tendered some expert advice to the Chief on the subject of entrenchments round his stronghold. The Mission Station already possessed a pretty strong stockade and a moat outside it. A few years previously attacks from any quarter might be expected — Muhammadan slave-traders, impulsive Masai, thievish Wagogo. If the first rush could be checked the attack was seldom persisted in.

The Consul's *safari* as it passed down the western

slopes of the Ulunga Hills [1] must have looked quite imposing to the natives who watched its departure behind their dracæna and euphorbia hedges. First marched Brentham himself with a stout staff and with his gun-carrier at his heels. Then came the caravan headman and guide, the Mwinyi-mpara or Kiongozi, as he was styled. He carried a small British ensign and was followed by twenty-five armed porters with Brentham's personal loads, each, however, with a Snider rifle and a neat uniform of cotton vest and breeches. Next followed Ann Jamblin, riding astride the Consul's Maskat donkey, every now and then glancing back on her fifteen Amazon porters, the pick of her Big-geru class who carried their mistress's effects in bundles on their woolly heads. Behind them was Lucy in her machila, its long pole borne on the shoulders of two strapping Walunga, with a relief crew behind of four other men of fine musculature. After that followed about fifty porters poising on their heads the heavier baggage — bundles of tents, bedding, water-tight tin boxes, bags of rice, bales of cloth, boxes of beads, cases of ammunition, cooking implements. Trotting by the side of this long file of men were two milch goats, bleating and baaing, but thoroughly enjoying the journey; they were intended to provide milk for the ladies' tea. One of the two was a special pet of Lucy's. To look after the goats was a little naked Mgogo boy — a released slave — who ran and frolicked with them, and kept the porters amused by his impudent mimicry of the white people. Lastly in the rear of the caravan was a guard of ten gunmen without loads to embarrass their quick movements.

Brentham and his charges were bound for the Stotts' station of Burungi, three or four days' journey — say, fifty miles — to the west. Lucy felt already many

[1] Ulunga was the southern portion of a country called "Ngulu" or "Nguru."

degrees better in health, though she thought it only decent to conceal her returning vigour and new-found animation. The picnic meals by the road side stimulated her appetite; her eye took pleasure in the changes of scenery, the new panoramas of plain and wilderness that unfolded themselves as she was swayingly borne along. Ann seemed sombre and preoccupied, as though noting land-marks for after recognition. Occasionally she pointed to this and that feature in the landscape and asked her Big-geru for its native name.

The very hot weather which closes the dry season made itself felt, so that the start from Hangodi had been begun in the early morning twilight, and each succeeding morning they took to the road at 5.30. They jogged along, with an occasional five minutes' rest, till half-past ten or until about that time they had found a stream valley or a water hole which contained water not too bad for cooking purposes. Then the caravan halted for the day in such shade as might be found, and the march was not resumed till 5 p.m.

Owing to the brilliancy of the moonlight it might be continued well into the night. During the long midday halt, the Goanese cook, aided by Halima and several porters and Brentham's Swahili butler, would prepare really very creditable little meals, and after eating the travellers would lie on unfolded deck chairs in some piece of shade where the hard ground had been swept clear of snakes, insects or scorpions. Brentham, if the heat were not too scorching, might wander with a shot-gun near by to try for the chance of a guinea-fowl or francolin or tiny antelope.

At four o'clock they had tea with goat's milk; and at five resumed their journey. The tents were pitched by moonlight and the beds made by the light of a candle lantern. Toilet processes were very summary; there was all too little water to wash in and the travellers must just sleep in their clothes and put any ideas

of effective ablutions out of their heads till they reached the water supply at the Stotts' station. The night camp was hastily surrounded by a thorn hedge cut from the acacia trees, and big fires were lighted to keep off lions and hyenas. Blacks and whites had to sleep in close proximity and the treasured goats and donkey in the middle of the circle of loads.

The country they marched over — a northward extension of the " Mkunda mkali " or " Bitter waste "— was at first steppe-like, then rocky and rising in a series of escarpments. Almost its only trees seemed to be flat-topped acacias, without leafage at this season, glistening in the blazing sun and studded with long white thorns. The thin grass was mostly burnt; nevertheless it was frequented by much game, and the land was apparently devoid of human inhabitants. Brentham, always obsessed by the fear of food scarcity, but hardly liking to absent himself from the line of march and his following caravan, started each morning a few minutes ahead of the rest and walked in advance as a pioneer, with his gun-carrier at his elbow. In this way he sometimes brought down, close to the path, an inquisitive Grant's gazelle or hartebeest; or a zebra out of the many herds which closed up to espy the distant concourse of men and then dissolved into a cloud of dust at the report of the gun. Even at this lean season of the year the male zebras were in good condition. Their yellow fat and juicy, sickly-sweet flesh delighted the hungry porters.

On the early morning of the fourth day, the expedition passed a few parched native plantations and one or two burnt huts and, as the sun rose, marched into the irregular circle of the Stott station, across a half-dry water-course, and found no human being to greet it. Silence and partially burnt buildings of clay and thatch, torn paper, vultures on the scorched trees, broken crockery, scraps of cloth, one or two pools of

dried blood, empty cartridge-cases, and the torn sacking and splintered boards of packing-cases.

"This is pretty ghastly, Miss Jamblin," said Brentham, returning to the hastily-cleaned camp amid the ruins of the Mission Station.

Lucy, feeling she could do nothing to help and had better not look at the caked patches of dried blood which the porters were removing, had withdrawn herself to a folding chair placed by Halima under the thin shade of a fire-scorched tree. Ann was examining the vestiges of the Stott property which the looters had left behind: school books and primers in the Swahili language, empty ink-pots, broken slates, enamelled iron plates and some substantial tables of native timber, too heavy for either the fugitives or their enemies to carry away. Ann's white solar "topi" and white dress were already smudged and sooted from the burnt wood and thatch.

"Ghastly, isn't it!" he went on. "I've just returned from a reconnaissance in which we rounded up three Masai youths — not warriors but the hulking boys that attend on the spearmen. Two men in my *safari* understand Masai and they are now trying to make out the story these boys tell. They evidently deny emphatically that the Stotts were killed. They keep pointing to the north-west as the direction in which they have gone, and say every now and then 'Irangi.' My interpreters infer that this place was attacked about a week ago by a party of Ruga-ruga coming from the Nyaturu country and travelling towards the coast. They besieged the station, and killed some of the Mission boys, but the Stotts apparently were not hurt. They defended themselves for some time, till a party of Masai came to their relief, and then the Ruga-ruga and 'black' Arabs were beaten off. Nevertheless the Stotts left the station afterwards

and went away to the north-west with the Masai escorting them. . . . I want to see if I get on their tracks or if I can find any real natives who saw the attack. . . . You seem to have a head on your shoulders . . . and an influence over the natives. I'll leave all but five of the men here under your orders. Already they're at work reconstructing the 'boma.' I propose skirmishing around and finding out also if the Arabs and Ruga-ruga are still in the neighbourhood. I'll be back before dark. . . ."

Ann: "You'd much better give up such a wild-goose chase as looking for the Stotts. Make for Kilimanjaro and the Mvita coast with Lucy. We've got mission stations in Taita and at Jomvu, near Mvita, where you could place her in comparative safety. I'd much rather return to Hangodi instead of floundering about in the wilderness, mad with thirst and unable to wash. I'm only a drag on you with my women porters whom your men can't leave alone — I daren't take my eyes off them. Lucy'll soon be well enough to ride your donkey — which I'm at present using. If the Arabs haven't plundered the Wagogo or if there are Masai bands in the neighbourhood you could easily buy a few donkeys — Masai breed, you know. They're quickly broken in to riding, especially with your Maskat donkey to show 'em how. And then you could travel much quicker. I don't think you'll have trouble with the Arabs farther north. It's a Masai country, and the Masai and the Muhammadans are at daggers drawn. . . ."

Brentham (hesitating): "No. I don't think I ought to let you go . . . I . . ." (His thoughts were saying: "*Let* her go. She's a tiresome termagant, she, with her fifteen women porters who'll cause the deuce-and-all of a lot of trouble before we've gone far. It would be lovely to have a long journey back to the coast with Lucy. *Of course* I'd respect her. I should

simply treat her as a sister" . . . and his pulses quickened). . . .

Ann: "*Let* me go? I'm my own mistress and not going to be ordered about by anybody. If I choose to go back, I'll go, even if I have to walk all the way. But there! I don't want to be tiresome. You go off on your prospecting and leave Lucy in my charge. I'll promise not to do a bolt till you return — and whenever I promise, I keep my promise."

(Lucy came up at this juncture and was told rather impatiently by Ann the dilemma in which the three of them were placed.) Captain Brentham turned away, called up his headman, gave him instructions, and finally went off with five gunmen and the three Masai youths. These were put in a good humour by being crammed with broiled meat and rice, the latter a food they had never tasted before, but accepted without demur at the hands of the godlike white man.

Ann, thus placed in authority, set to work to carry out her plans. She had the interior of the station circle cleaned as much as possible of half-burnt house material, and gathered together what remained in the ruins of books, clothes, trade goods. The looting had evidently been very hurried, and no doubt the Stotts had conveyed some things with them on their retreat. Lucy, sharply ordered by Ann not to over-exert herself, sat in the shade in a deck chair, very apprehensive as to the future and worried that Roger should have gone away.

The news that white people were back at Burungi — as this station was called — penetrated quickly through this seemingly deserted region. So often in Africa there occurs this wireless telegraphy, really due perhaps to the lurking here and there in the brush and herbage of invisible natives, observing what goes on and bounding away noiselessly to carry the news to other prowlers. In the afternoon when Ann within

the thorn enclosure had made things a little more tidy and presentable there appeared in the middle distance numbers of Wagogo warriors gazing at the new arrivals with kindly neutrality, occasionally calling out friendly, deprecatory greetings. Encouraged by Ann's answering shouts in Kagulu they approached the "boma," and even ventured within the camp enclosure, squatting then on their heels to exchange information. Their confidence was sealed by little gifts of tobacco. The attack on the Mission Station was described. The white people had been taken by surprise, but had held their own till the Wagogo and Masai came to their assistance. The Ruga-ruga shot fire-arrows in among the thatched roofs and set fire to some of the houses. They even broke in through one part of the "boma," but three of them were killed by the white man's people.

The fight had lasted half-a-day and one day. Then the Wangwana had drawn off — to the south. Two days more and the white people had gone — there were the white man —"Sitoto," they called him — and the white woman chief — she was a great "doctor"— and three white children . . . they had all gone off with a party of the Masai — to the north somewhere. The Masai had sold them donkeys to ride. Some Wagogo had gone with them. It was perhaps four days since they went away. No! the Wagogo had *not* plundered the white man's place. They were frightened to come there because of the white man's "medicine." . . .

"Then how did you get that?" said Ann, pointing to a soiled white petticoat which an elderly man wore over one shoulder and across his chest.

"That? That had been given him by the white woman herself for running to summon the Masai." . . .

"See here," said Ann, in fragmentary Kagulu. "You've got donkeys — Masai donkeys — among you. The Ruga-ruga have not raided *you*. You bring me

here *three good strong donkeys* and I will buy them for a good price: white cloth, brass rings, iron wire, red cloth and gunpowder."

They conferred among themselves and thought they might produce three donkeys — for a price.

"Well, then fetch them — *at once*. Otherwise the big white man, the great chief of all the white men on the coast, the Balozi, will believe you helped to plunder this station and make you give up the property you've stolen." . . .

Roger returned late that evening in brilliant moonlight to find that Ann had purchased with his trade goods three good stout grey asses with broad shoulder stripes. One she reserved for herself, the other two she transferred to Brentham. They would serve for him to ride and also provide his Goanese cook with a mount. [This Portuguese-Indian was a very poor marcher and much inclined to fever; yet in some ways the second most important person of the caravan, decent cooking being such an enormous help to good health in Africa.] Lucy, who had grown much stronger for this change and excitement, could ride the Maskat donkey and her hammock men could return to Hangodi with some of Ann's loads.

Ann would further borrow five of Brentham's gunmen to escort her and her fifteen women-porters — her Big-geru — back to Hangodi. She had also engaged at extravagant pay a dozen of the Wagogo, fleet of foot and brave hunters. These, armed with their long-bladed spears, would guide and precede her little party, scaring away the wild beasts by their cries. Lions and rhinoceroses were distinctly a danger to be reckoned with. . . . By forced marching, especially at night, Ann would be back at Hangodi in two days. It was therefore unwise to miss a single moonlight night as the moon would soon be on the wane. The Ruga-ruga and Wangwana never attacked at night, and

if they were anywhere in the neighbourhood — which the Wagogo scouts would soon find out — the party would hide in the daylight hours.

Meantime Brentham and Lucy could remain encamped at Burungi awaiting the return of Ann's escort. If the message was "All's well," they could start off for the coast by the roundabout northern route. . . .

"You seem to be a very capable woman," said Brentham, "as well as being an obstinate one. I agree to your plan, though I have a presentiment I may regret it. If you change your mind and come back I shan't reproach you for being fickle. And besides, you may bring us later news. I must in any case stay here for a few days to prepare for the big march. I must shoot game and have a lot of 'biltong'[1] made for the men. . . ."

"I'm glad you agree," said Ann. "I know I shall be in the right place at Hangodi — for many reasons. As it is, I've already had an idea. The Stotts seem to have been saved by the Masai. The Masai that our Walunga people call 'Wahumba' are on good terms with us. We brought about peace between them and Mbogo. They come to our station to trade and we have cured several of their wounded men from bad lion bites. We will send messengers to the Humba Masai asking for a large war party of spearmen to await down below in the plains any attack by the Arabs. I think the mere knowledge the Masai are there will keep the Arabs from coming near Ulunga."

So the next morning Ann rode off at five o'clock astride her Masai donkey, on which some makeshift arrangement of padded cloths had been tied by way of saddle. Her buxom Big-geru hoisted their light loads and struck up a Moody and Sankey hymn translated by Ann into Kagulu. The grinning Wanyamwezi

[1] Strips of lean meat dried in the sun and thus preserved for a considerable time in dry weather.

gunmen brought up the rear, and the wild, unclothed Wagogo with fantastic ostrich feather or zebra-mane head-dresses dashed on ahead, whooping and leaping and shouting their determination to scare away the beasts of the field from the white woman-chief who talked like a man.

CHAPTER XI

THE HAPPY VALLEY

ROGER, left alone with Lucy, resolved he would "do the right thing," clenched his teeth so to speak on the vow. He was the more fiercely determined to act honourably because he felt himself to be fighting against her own weakness of fibre, against her overpowering inclination as well as his own. Her attractiveness for him had greatly increased since the renewal of their comradeship. In the early days of the acquaintance, though her prettiness and virginal charm were appealing, she had the naïveté and insipidity of an inexperienced girl which soon weary a man of the world who tires of the relation between master and pupil. Now she was a married woman; tempered, rendered more subtle by suffering and experience of mankind, who was readier to express her feelings through her eyes and her reticence than by direct speech. She talked less unreflectingly, and the things she said were more due to her own observation and reasoning than second-hand opinions picked up from other people.

Ann, in the week in which he had seen the two women together, had been just the right foil to throw up Lucy's charming femininity, her refinement in dress and appearance and in the tones of her voice. Ann by contrast was an impudent self-assertive virago with the worth at best of a good drudge. After a year and a half's absence from Europe he made this rediscovery of Lucy, set against a background of Savage Africa — coarse landscapes, jagged rocks, unwieldy trees, bush

conflagrations, naked men, wild beasts just kept at bay. (On moonlight nights they could actually descry the grey-white forms of lions and hyenas padding noiselessly round the precincts of their boma.) These violent incongruities made her seem to him a being of exquisite refinement and yet of physical charm. Returning health, intense happiness, the dawning hope of a bright future were dispelling the anæmia and giving back to her face and neck the tinted white of a healthy skin, warmed in tone by a good circulation. There was a sparkle of animation in her violet eyes and a new lustre in her brown gold hair.

It would be a good thing for both, he felt, if he found the Stotts as soon as possible and induced them to join company in a march to the coast. His career — Yes, he must remember that. His career above all things. He must not be turned aside from his great ambitions by any woman. Yet he had missed fire over the Unguja appointment and wanted consolation elsewhere. It was rather weary *always* to be at work, in an office, or in the field: never to settle down to a honeymoon and the joys of domesticity. Perhaps he should have taken another line — the Colonial Office and administrative work, not the Foreign Office and adventurous diplomacy in Savage Africa. . . . He wanted to explore, create, and then administer a great African Empire, tasks infinitely above the mean capacity of a Godfrey Dewburn or a Spencer Bazzard. Why could he not now — straight away — plunge into the vast unknown which lay before him to the north, to the north-west? Where had Stanley disappeared to? What had become of Emin? What was happening in Uganda since the death of Mutesa? What unsolved mysteries lay west of the Victoria Nyanza, north of Tanganyika, south of the Bahr-al-ghazal? Should he take Lucy to his heart, throw conventions and commissions to the winds, and start away with her

on a wonderful journey of discovery, leaving the world and the Rev. John Baines to say what they liked, and covering his private treachery by his amazing discoveries?

Nonsense! Why, Queen Victoria would never overlook this act of adultery. He might discover twenty lakes and name them all after princes of her family or annex gold mines and pipes of diamonds and she would refuse the accolade, and Society at her bidding would close its ranks against the dishonoured missionary's wife. Besides, he had barely enough trade goods with which to pay his way back to the coast, especially by a round-about route. The African soon looks coldly on the god-like white man if he has no more beads, cloth, copper wire, knives, and gun-caps with which to pay road dues, "customs" or good-will presents.

And his armed porters? They were only engaged for a six-months' *safari*. They must be fed and paid or they would desert. . . . He must put all this nonsense out of his head — take a few pills, a little bromide — tire himself out every day big game shooting or scouting till the men sent with Ann Jamblin returned with their news.

If he took all this exercise, he would not lie awake at night in his hot tent, under his mosquito curtain longing, aching to go to Lucy's quarters and say, "I *love* you: let us fight against it no longer. We may all be dead a month hence."

To guard against such impulses he had insisted on Halima's sleeping on an Unguja mat in her mistress's tent, and had surrounded the tent with a square of reed fence which gave her a greater degree of privacy than the wretched tent afforded. Within this there was space for a bathroom and a "sitting-room," a shaded retreat to which she could retire for a siesta or a confabulation with Halima who was still giving her

instruction in Swahili. Outside this "harim"—as his men who constructed it certainly took it to be—there was a "baraza" common to them both: a thatched shelter open all round. Here the camp table was placed for meals.

Roger determined to shut Lucy out of his thoughts as much as possible, to think only for the day, for the dangers by which they were surrounded, the hundred risks which attended their ever getting back to civilization. . . . As soon as they could reach the coast he would send Lucy to England and return to his Consulate at Medinat-al-barkah. . . . Of course, should John Baines die of fever—missionaries often did—or—if—he were killed? . . . Suppose his station really *was* attacked . . . ? But then, again, such thoughts as these were of the order of David's when he hankered after Bathsheba. . . .

And then Lucy, again, Lucy might die of fever—she scarcely seemed cut out for an African life, which is why he had begun pitying her. . . .

"I've had perfectly splendid sport to-day," said Roger, standing before Lucy's "baraza" where the camp table was laid for tea. "I've shot a rhino—they're cutting it up now—two hartebeests, and two impala. That'll give us all the 'biltong' we can carry. I'm filthily dirty, as you can see—ash and charcoal from the burnt bush, and sweat—God! It *has* been sweltering!—and the run after that—and *from* that—rhino! No. I'm not wounded—there's no need for emotion—but the rhino as he charged—and *I* doubled—squirted blood over me from his nostrils—I must look like a fighting chimney sweep—I'll go and have a bath and then you shall give me tea."

"Don't be long," said Lucy. "There's *such* lots to talk about. Your men have come back from Hangodi with a note to me from John! He says so far 'all's

well.' And two Masai, Halima says, are waiting to see you. They keep saying 'Sitoto,' which means, I suppose, some news about the Stotts' whereabouts. *How* exciting it's all getting. I *am* enjoying it!"

"Halima" (to her maid): "Waambia watu wa mpishi tunataka chai, *marra* moja!"

Four days afterwards, everything being ready for the fresh venture into the unknown, loads lightened and tightened, and the biltong sufficiently dry to be tied on top of the loads (imparting a disagreeable smell of a butcher's shop to the caravan as it passed in single file), they set out with Masai guides to find the Stotts. They travelled over the water-parting from the rivers flowing to the Indian Ocean to those that ended in vague marshes and bitter lakes. They climbed great escarpments and descended into broad valleys between high cliffs and found themselves amongst strange peoples, chiefly pastoral, keepers of great herds of sleek, humped cattle, of dwarf African goats and fat-tailed sheep.

The first of these, the Warangi, were fortunately allied in speech to the Wagogo — so could be communicated with. They were a truculent lot, inclined to make trouble with strangers. They seemed on this occasion, however, too much excited over affairs of their own to be much interested in the arrival of white folk, whom they had probably never seen before except in the form of pale-faced Arabs. They replied briefly that a white man and woman and their children had preceded Brentham's party by a few days — when the moon was still at the full. They were accompanied by a band of Masai with whom the Warangi were friends. . . .

"Are there any Arabs here?" asked Brentham through his interpreter. "Waalabu?" No! They came sometimes to buy ivory, but on their last visit

they had tried to carry off some Rangi people as slaves, and if they showed their faces again in Burangi, they would be driven away.

"Then what are you all so excited about?"

They replied it was an affair of their clan, of the people who lived in these villages. Their young married men had gone out this dry season to kill elephants as was their custom, but had returned after three months with no luck at all: hardly a tusk worth looking at, very little meat, and two men killed by the elephants. There could be but one explanation for this. Their wives had been unfaithful to them as soon as their backs were turned. It was well known that if a wife and husband were separated and the wife was unfaithful, a misfortune at once fell on the husband. Consequently the custom of their tribe in such cases was to burn the guilty women on large pyres of brushwood. These pyres were now finished — the white man could see them there along the bank of the river. . . . Presently the adulterous ladies whose husbands had returned from the luckless elephant-shoot would be led out, tied to the brushwood bundles, and set on fire. He might stay and witness the imposing spectacle if he chose. They learnt that he too was accompanied by a wife — a white woman. It might be a moral lesson to her — if white women were ever unfaithful. . . .

Roger begged the Warangi to spare the women this time. By and bye he would come back to them and explain the whole mystery of luck in sport and the ensuring of an accurate aim, perhaps give them a "medicine," to produce the result they wanted. But meantime he assured them that if they burnt so much as one woman's little finger a terrible curse would fall on the land.

Lucy asked what all this talk was about, and he

replied: "Oh, nothing very important — big game shooting." She was preoccupied with pleasanter subjects, the greater coolness of the air now that they had ascended to a higher level, the new green grass of the coming spring, and her own greatly improved health. . . .

"If all goes well," said Roger, "we ought to reach the place where the Stotts are in two long days' march."

"Shall we? I'm rather sorry, as though something was going to break our delicious dream. I should like to go on and on like this for a year. . . ."

"And what about my official duties? I, too, am enjoying this to the full, but I am worried about whether I have done the right thing. . . . With a desire to please every one all round I sometimes fancy I have embarked on a perilous adventure. . . . However we must hope for the best. Of course all this is absolutely new ground. I ought to be earning a Geographical medal; instead of which I shall only get an official rebuke. . . . Did you notice that we seem to have entered a new watershed?"

Lucy: "Although I taught Geography at school, I never really understood what a 'watershed' was. What is it?"

Roger: "I suppose it means the area in which all the waters flow to the same receptacle — a sea, a lake, a marsh. We've just left a river which was flowing steadily to the south, to some unknown end. We rode up a small rise, and now, see, the gathering streams are all flowing northwards. The Masai say these brooks unite farther on to form a river which ends in a lake. Think of *that,* Lucy! We shall discover a new lake! It ought to be called 'Lake Lucy.' . . ."

Lucy (blushing): "Oh no, indeed, I should feel quite uncomfortable if I were made so prominent. . . . But the country seems to get lovelier and lovelier. . . ."

The new streams to which Roger referred irrigated a broad and even expanse of fertile plain sloping gently to the north, and seeming to terminate at the base of gigantic cliffs or lofty mountains which surrounded this valley on three sides. They could only make out dimly the forms of the highest mountains because of the dry-season haze, but they seemed like the craters of volcanoes. Riding to the top of an isolated hillock Roger obtained confirmation of the guides' story. The valley ended in a lake of respectable size.

The grassy flats between the converging rivulets swarmed with big game which showed comparatively little fear of man and might be seen grazing with herds of the natives' cattle. A succession of exclamations, half wonderment, half fear, came from Lucy.

"Oh! . . . I . . . *say!* . . . I thought those were great tree trunks till they moved, but . . . they're . . ."

"They're *giraffes,* by Jove! I wonder whether I ought to bring one down? Better not . . . might delay us . . . and I don't know how the natives 'ud take it. . . ."

A herd of six or seven stately giraffes suspended their browsing on the upper branches of an acacia tree, and gazed at them with their liquid eyes, flicking their satiny bodies with tails that terminated in large black tassels.

"O-oh!" came from Lucy, as she reined in her donkey. "*Look* at those things over there! Like houses or great rocks, but they're moving too!"

She pointed with her riding whip to some grey bulks in the middle distance which, as they swished through the herbage, showed here and there a gleam of polished tusks.

"Shoot! Master, shoot!" exclaimed the Wanyamwezi. . . . "Elephants, Master!" But Roger called for silence and held his hand. Supposing the elephants charged down on Lucy? And then he did not know

how the sounds of guns would be received in this new country, what the unknown natives might think, and lastly, perhaps there was beginning to dawn on him an appreciation of what this spectacle meant: a piece of absolutely unspoiled Africa, not yet ravaged by the white man or the native hunter, armed with the white man's weapons. His caravan had plenty of dried meat. They should not break the charm of the Happy Valley — the phrase came suddenly into his mind, some dim remembrance of Dr. Samuel Johnson's ponderous romance.

As they advanced northwards the scenes grew more idyllic. Herds of gnus, hartebeests, elands, and zebras, intermingled with reed buck and impala, alternately stared in immobility, then dashed off in clouds of yellow dust, and once more stood at gaze. Gazelles with glossy black, annulated horns and bodies brilliant in colour — golden-red, black-banded, and snowy-white below — cropped the turf a few yards from the faintly marked track which the caravan was following; and though the bucks lifted their heads to observe this advancing file of human beings they scarcely moved away more than a few yards.

The Valley was not entirely given up to wild life, though it seemed likely that it was only used by man as a pasture ground, and that he preferred the higher country, the hillocks on either side of the plain, for his habitations, out of the way of floods and swamps. But large herds of cattle browsed among antelopes and zebra and were watched over by herdsmen who displayed singularly little curiosity over this first invasion of the Happy Valley by the white man. The Stotts who had preceded Roger and Lucy seemed to have satisfied their curiosity, once and for all. These cattle-tenders were different in physical type to the ordinary Bantu Negro. They were tall; gracefully, slenderly built; and reminded Brentham of Somalis, though their

head-hair was close-cropped. Such women as were met showed no sign of fear. They were clad in ample garments of dressed leather. But the men had all the gallant nakedness of the Masai — a skin cape over the shoulders, otherwise only ivory arm-rings and metal-chain necklaces.

The Masai guides occasionally plucked handfuls of grass and exhibited them to the groups of herdsmen as a testimony to the peaceful intentions of the white man's caravan. This voucher was further confirmed by the returning band of Masai who had escorted the Stotts to this Arcadia and were now returning to northern Nguru. They exchanged musical salutations with Roger's guides and told them the "Sitoto" were camped in a village one day's further journey to the north, near the shores of the lake.

"That's all right," said Roger, his mind greatly relieved. "Then let's give our *safari* a half-holiday and take things easy. We'll pitch our camp on that knoll. How delightful is this short green turf after the miles and miles of burnt grass we've passed through. The spring has begun here a month earlier than in the lower-lying country. I expect the high mountains to the north have attracted the rains, though it's only October. Have you noticed, also, since we entered this valley we've had no mosquitoes? I wonder why? Something p'raps they don't like in the water, or not enough long grass? . . ."

As soon as the camp was finished, the pastoral people brought them rich, sweet milk for sale, in tightly-woven grass receptacles, in calabashes, or clay pots. Sometimes this milk had a smoky taste from the rough methods by which the milk pots were cleansed. But it was as sweet as a nut and seemed to Lucy, who had long been deprived of milk, except doled out in small quantities for tea, incomparably delicious as a thirst-quencher. And these Egyptian-like people — so often showing a

Pharaonic profile and speaking a language which Roger afterwards declared not very far removed from Gala — also traded in honey, honey flavoured with the scent of the acacia blossoms, appearing now as golden fluff on the awakening trees.

The next day, the seventh since they left Burungi, Brentham's caravan came into full view of the lake, its shores lined with dense ranks of pinkish-white flamingoes. To the south-east was a native village of long, continuous "tembe" houses, arranged more or less in parallelograms, or hollow squares, enclosing for each family or group a turfy space where the cattle passed the night and family life was carried on in the open air and in security.

One of these enclosures had evidently been given over to the Stotts for a temporary home. And from out of it Mr. and Mrs. Stott might be descried, hurrying to meet the caravan. Before they could arrive, Roger halted his men and surveyed the whole scene before him from a grassy mound where he thought to pitch his camp. Projecting mountain buttresses shut in the valley and the lake, west, north and east. West and north these mountains almost overhung the flat lake shores in an abrupt escarpment, blue, without details, in the afternoon shadow. To the east of the lake, though there were great heights and in the north-east a hint of giant summits capped with snow, the rise was not so abrupt, more broken, and the rocks more arid, but vivid and variegated in colour — red, yellow, greenish grey, purple black and creamy white. The mountains on the west were diversified with combes and glens, were carved, moulded, seamed with watercourses; embroidered and mantled with dark green forests. Where the lake was deep its waters were a pure cobalt, but its shallows were whitish-green with salt or soda, and the level shores from which the waters had retreated were greyish white, probably with the

guano of the countless flamingoes, who had their nesting-stools some distance back from the water's edge. Herds of cattle browsed peacefully on the green water-meadows of the river-delta; nearer at hand flocks of black and white sheep mingled with half-shy gazelles of golden brown. Great Secretary birds — grey, black, and white — stalked through the herbage looking for snakes and lizards, knowing no fear of man in their honourable calling. Blue whorls of smoke arose from the fishermen's fires on the lake shore, where fish was being smoked on wooden frames. All this was irradiated by the yellow light of the westering sun. Before the Stotts could reach them and break their silence of contentment, Roger turned to Lucy and said: "This *is* the Happy Valley!"

The Stotts were of course full of questions and wonderment. Mr. Stott was a middle-aged man of strong build, honest hazel eyes, clipped beard, tanned face and generally pleasing appearance. He had never before met either Lucy or Brentham, so Mrs. Stott had to make the introductions.

After these surprised and joyous greetings, an adjournment took place to the Stotts' quarters. Although they had only been about a week established here, in a portion of the village of Mwada lent them by the native chief, the practical and never defeated Stotts — the born colonists, the realized Swiss Family Robinson — had already made themselves a new home in the wilderness. They had swept out and cleaned the "tembes," the continuous huts of wattle and daub, divided into many compartments, which enclosed the turfy square; and in the centre of their "compound" had erected a circular building of stout palm poles and grass that covered a swept space of ground. In the middle of this they had fashioned a table of reed-bundles fastened to upright posts and had manufactured rough forms and stools of hyphaene palm trunks.

This was their "baraza" or reception-room, their eating-house, and shaded playground for their hardy children. Within the enclosed ground they kept their milch goats, sheep, and riding donkeys. Of these they had quite a troop, purchased from the Masai. These asses had proved most useful as beasts of burden for the transport of their loads, so that they almost managed without human porterage. Mr. Stott had constructed very practical pack saddles.

"Come along to our baraza," said genial Mrs. Stott. "Let us try and make you up some kind of a meal before we begin talking."

Roger gave a few directions about his own camping, a quarter of a mile distant, and then joined Lucy and the Stotts, who were walking to "our new mission station," as Mrs. Stott called it.

"You know we are *never* down-hearted; we *know* God orders everything for the best! I am sure He thought we were settling down too comfortably among the Wagogo, and so gave us a hint to press farther into the interior. *Of course,* when things quiet down: for either the Germans or the English *must* conquer East Africa: it would be sickening to leave the Arabs and Ruga-ruga in control — we shall build up again our Burungi station and put capable people in charge of it, people who'll get on well with the Wagogo. . . . They want a bit of managing. You see how well it would suit as a halt on the way to this wonderful country — What do you call it? 'The Happy Valley'? Yes, *that* shall be its name. *How* the Lord's ways are *past* finding out! I felt *so* sick at heart when we were leaving Burungi. . . . I'll tell you how it all happened. Our Masai friends had beaten off the Ruga-ruga, but the Wagogo thought they intended to return, probably with real Arabs in command. My husband is obliged to shoot game; otherwise we couldn't live, much less feed our people. They raided us chiefly for arms and

ammunition. . . . We beat them off, but the Wagogo thought they would be sure to return — much stronger next time. So after thinking it over and putting our case before God in prayer we decided that night after the attack ceased, to spend the hours of darkness packing. The next morning we bought ten more donkeys from the Masai, besides the ten we had already, loaded them up and then said to our Masai friends — my husband speaks Masai pretty well: 'Now, can you guide us to some country where we can be safe from the Lajomba — their name for the Arabs — for a time?' And they led us here . . . let us say, rather, they were God's agents in leading us here. Isn't this a *wonderful* country? We have never seen the like. Somehow we feel so *safe* here. You can't think of any enemy coming over those high mountains — one of them has snow on the summit — or over the cliffs. They can only come up the river valley. And to do that they must fight their way through the Rangi and Fiome peoples. The Rangi people speak a language like Chi-gogo, and so — oddly enough — do the fisher folk round this extraordinary lake. But the others don't look like ordinary Negroes. They are more like Somalis. And I can't make anything out of their language. But although they're different to the Masai they seem to have some kind of alliance with them, and they received us here as friends, because the Masai brought us. *What* a field for the Lord's work! And to think I almost *doubted* God when He let the Ruga-ruga attack Burungi! . . .

"But here we are, at our temporary home, and I must go to the cook-house and see about your meal. You won't mind native stuff, will you? You see we've lost most of our tinned provisions, and indeed we had been living on the country long before the Ruga-ruga attacked us. Like all the other missionaries of late we've had very few caravans from the coast."

Mr. Stott led the way to the "baraza" with its rough table of reed-bundles on a framework of sticks and its palm trunks to sit on.

The Stott children were playing on the dusty turf of the cleared ground in front of the baraza.

"I'm afraid you'll think our little 'uns rather uncared for," said Mr. Stott apologetically; "but my poor wife's had too much to do in our hurried flight and after we got here to spend much time on their clothing or even getting them clean!" The eldest of the three was a pretty boy with light flaxen hair and blue eyes, very tanned of skin, very grubby of face and hands. He wore a tattered smock and short breeches, vestiges of a "sailor suit." On his feet were cleverly made native sandals, as on those of his younger brother and little sister, whose legs and feet were otherwise naked, and the two smaller children had little on but a yard or two of calico wound round the waist. Lucy recognized in the youngest the solemn baby she had seen at Unguja playing with the large cockroaches; and said so.

"Yes," replied Mr. Stott. "Afraid of nothing, poor little mite. When the Ruga-ruga came I hurriedly built up a sort of zariba of boxes and stones, and put a tarpaulin over it and told the little 'uns to keep quiet; and there they were, all through the fighting. Mother and I would go and give 'em food every now and again, and Edgar here"—pointing to the boy—"'ud say, 'How's the fight going, Daddy?' And Edgar's bin a rare good boy since we came here, helping to tie these bundles of reeds and making himself useful. Our eldest's at home in Ireland with her grandmother — for her education. The next one we buried years ago in the Nguru country, and the very youngest — bless her — died of infantile diarrhœa last March at Burungi. That accounts for the six of 'em; and I'll lay there aren't many British children have

had such an adventurous bringing-up, 'cept the young Livingstones and Moffats."

Mrs. Stott was now spreading a wrinkled, grey-white cloth over the reed table-top. And the children were up on their feet helping her and a native servant bring the meal from the cook-house to the baraza.

"We're giving you just the native *ugali* — porridge, you know," said Mrs. Stott, "but there's a lovely pot of fresh milk from the natives' cattle. Here's some honey in a calabash. Here are the rest of the scones we had for breakfast. I've made you some tea — rather weak, but it is *so* precious. And whilst you're tackling *that* I'm going to fry some fish we got from the lake this morning — bony, but very sweet."

During their meal Roger and Lucy tried to give in instalments a description of the extraordinary circumstances which had brought them here in company. Mrs. Stott, who had fetched her sewing so that she might not be wasting time (Mr. Stott had excused himself, having urgent work to do till the evening), looked a little puzzled and not quite acquiescent over Brentham's explanations.

"Here, children! You go now and help Brahimu and Kagavezi. Don't get into mischief. Keep out of the sun, don't pick up scorpions, and don't go outside the boma. . . . I'm an outspoken woman, you know, Lucy. I can't help saying I think you ought to have stuck by your husband."

"But I was so *ill,* Mrs. Stott, and John *insisted* on my going. Didn't he . . . Captain Brentham?"

"He did really, Mrs. Stott. I had instructions to advise all the missionaries to leave their stations and return to the coast — indeed, I come here to you with that message, but I suppose you won't obey it?"

"Indeed I won't, Captain Brentham, though I thank you for your efforts to find us and help us. I do indeed. But wherever my husband is, there will I be too,

unless he absolutely ordered me to go away. . . . And I saw it was the will of God that I should go."

"Well: that was what John did to me — absolutely *ordered* me to go," said Lucy, beginning to cry. "He ordered Ann to go with me. It isn't my fault — our fault — that Ann has gone back, in spite of John's *positive commands.* Ann never obeys any one. Oh dear, oh dear! *what* should I do . . . I feel if I go back to that place I shall simply die . . . and yet I shall lose your good opinion . . . if I go to the coast with Captain Brentham. . . ."

"Oh, I don't say that. I'm not one for passing judgments on my fellow creatures. It's between them and God. But look here, Captain Brentham: I don't want to keep you idle. I'll be bound there's a hundred things you want to see to in your camp. I'll keep Lucy with me. She and I are old friends, as you know. If you'd send over her loads and her native woman — let's see, what was her name? I remember how she nursed you when your poor baby came — and went — Halima? Yes. Well, send over everything that belongs to Lucy and her tent shall be pitched inside our boma whilst she stays here. She and I will talk things over a bit and then, maybe, we'll call you into consultation. I'm sure you want to do what's best for us all. What a *strange* place to meet in! The last time we spoke together was in your grand Arab house at Unguja and I was more than a bit afraid of you."

Mrs. Stott rose up from her sewing, walked with Brentham to the exit from the compound, and gazed across the outer greensward to the very blue lake, with its whitish rim of scum or salt. In the distance the blush-tint flamingoes flew with wings of black and scarlet in V formations, against an azure background of colossal mountains rising tier above tier; or, their glistening plumage showed up more effectively against the violet shadows of the western cliffs and wooded

gorges bordering the lake, and still more strikingly when contrasted with the cobalt surface of the lake itself. Other flamingoes waded into the lake, filtering through their laminated beaks the minute organisms evidently abundant in its water. Hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of these birds stood in serried ranks along the curving, diverging shores. The rear ranks were composed of immature birds of dirty-white plumage streaked with brown; but these were masked by the front rows of adults, affectedly conscious of their beauty of plumage and outline. They exhibited a hundred mannerisms in their poses: lowered their kinky necks to dabble in the ooze, or raised them perpendicularly and " honked " to let the humans know they were on their guard (though never a man in these parts thought of harming them). Or they cleaned their backs with rosy coils of neck, stood on one vermilion leg and bent the other limb beneath the belly feathers. Or they fenced at each other with decurved bills of purple and red in make-believe petulance, and because life-conditions were so perfect that they had nothing whatever to grumble at. . . . Some Wambugwe canoes were approaching the lake shore with fish to sell to the white men. A considerable section of the flamingoes rose into the sky with a display of roseate tints against the blue . . . then landed and folded their wings in assurance of safety.

" Yes," continued Mrs. Stott, " I little thought we should meet under circumstances like these. Aren't those flamingoes *wonderful?* Like a revelation of God — almost. I shall stay here if only to look after them. *They* shall be the roses in my garden. I shan't want any others. You see they're not afraid of man and they don't get in man's way. They aren't good to eat — much too fishy. And, as far as I can see, they don't eat fish; only mud, seemingly — shrimps, p'raps. . . .

"Well, Consul: come again at supper-time; and if I'm too stingy over my precious tea, at any rate I'll give you hot milk and pancakes and honey."

Left with Lucy, Mrs. Stott first took her to the washing hut and provided the means for a good bath and next lent her some garment of the dressing-gown order with which to clothe herself till her luggage and her attendant arrived.

"I'll tell you what I am going to advise Captain Brentham to do, Lucy," said Mrs. Stott. "Come what may, you'll be none the worse for a good rest here. This place is evidently far healthier than the lower country. The Consul shall bargain with your Masai guides to go as fast as they can back to Ulunga and find out what has happened at Hangodi. If things are still quiet there, the probability is they are going to remain quiet. In that case — if your husband does not absolutely forbid it, Captain Brentham ought to take you back to Hangodi and leave you there. He can then find his own way *somehow* to the place he lives at — Medina. If the messengers come back with *bad* news about the Arabs, or if John Baines positively vetoes your returning, *then* all you can do is to put yourself under the Consul's care and travel with him to Mvita . . . unless you like to stop with me and live on country produce. I think we can — whilst you're waiting here — get in touch with the Masai beyond the mountains and by giving them a present induce them to guide you to the Kilimanjaro country, to one of the mission stations there — Evangelical or Methodist, don't matter which. After that all would be plain sailing, for I don't believe the Arabs of the British sphere are going to rise."

When in the evening of that day, by the light of a camp fire — they had practically no artificial light — Mrs. Stott put this plan before Roger, he promptly agreed. It would show he had done the right thing.

It would go far to save Lucy's good name, especially among Mission folk. And it would give him nearly a month to stay and explore the Happy Valley. He had spent much of the day with James Stott helping him in his work on the embryo station, and Stott had told him of wonderful things he had seen or had gleaned from native information. There was the new lake to survey roughly; there was a paradise of big game to shoot in. Here Mrs. Stott intervened: "I hope you and my husband will go slow as regards shooting. I know we must have the meat and we're so nearly bankrupt at the coast that a few tusks of ivory would come in handy. But somehow I should like to think of this Happy Valley as a sort of preserved zoological gardens where all these innocent creatures of God's handiwork ——"

"I shouldn't call a rhinoceros innocent, Mrs. Stott," said Roger, smoking his pipe with such contentment as he had not known for months —"I have rather a tender conscience about antelopes and zebras, but rhinos attack you absolutely unprovoked. . . ."

Mrs. Stott: "Only because men began humbugging them first of all, long ago, I expect. However, if ever I lived to see our mission stations self-supporting and growing all the food they needed, I'd never let James fire another shot at the game."

The next morning the two Masai guides, well rewarded, started off with a package. It contained letters home from the Stotts, telling of their wonderful deliverance; a brief despatch from Captain Brentham to H.M. Agent at Unguja, and letters to John Baines and Ann Jamblin. John was asked how things were going, and whether on second thoughts he would prefer Lucy to return to Hangodi, and if he could take the next opportunity of having the accompanying letters sent to the coast; and Ann was given — curtly — information as to Lucy's reaching the temporary station

of the Stotts. However expansive the Stotts might be, within the compass of one sheet of paper, they said very little about the situation of the Happy Valley; and Brentham was still more reticent. Both no doubt for the same reason, that the Happy Valley was too good a proposition to be given away lightly to a greedy world. Mrs. Stott still hoped, despite concluded boundary conventions, it might be brought within the British sphere; Brentham did not want any other fellow to have a go at its big game or an examination of its alluring secrets till he had had a chance to return.

Whilst these letters were being carried to their destination by two lithe, naked men of red-brown skin, with hair done up in periwigs of twine soaped with mutton fat and the same red-ochre as coloured their sleek bodies, men who carried knobkerries in their waistcords and long-bladed spears in the right hand, great oval shields on the left arm, and who ran on sandalled feet a steady six miles an hour when they were on the road: Lucy and Roger disposed themselves to await patiently the news which — they felt — was to determine their fate.

Twenty days went by in the Happy Valley in blissful sameness. Lucy had her very limited wardrobe washed in the lake waters which had some oddly cleansing, blanching effect — something chemical which both Roger and Mr. Stott would discuss in muttered phrases. Lucy and Mrs. Stott together, with many a laugh at blunder or foiled hopes of success, at length succeeded in ironing the skirts and bodices and petticoats and linen with a parody of a flat-iron, made for them by a naked Elkonono blacksmith in a native forge.

Brentham and his Wanyamwezi porters helped Mr. Stott complete his new station. Or they organized great shooting parties which enriched Mr. Stott with ivory that he might some day sell, as against trade goods and tea; or they accumulated biltong for Roger's

expedition, besides finding meat for the day-by-day food of these hungry Wanyamwezi. To meet Mrs. Stott's scruples and objections they had themselves paddled in Wambugwe canoes farther up the lake and shot elephants, zebras, buffaloes, antelopes, on the flats twenty miles to the north of the Stotts' station. Or they rode donkeys and travelled twenty miles southwards, back along the road they had come (and got faint, far-off rumours of men fighting, leagues and leagues away, which made them anxious).

Or they laid out plantations in the rich alluvial soil behind the station and fenced them in. There Mr. Stott could plant his poor remnant of English vegetable seeds, or with greater hope the maize, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, ground-nuts, beans, and manioc of the agricultural and fishing Bantu population.

Then, on the twenty-first day of this busy three weeks, the Masai messengers once more squatted before the Stotts' baraza. Silently one of them tendered to Mrs. Stott a little package of dried banana leaves, tied with some native fibre. Inside a fold of old newspaper and a makeshift envelope made out of a copy-book cover, on one half-sheet of dirty copy-book paper, Ann sent Lucy this message:

Mbogo's Village,
NOVEMBER SOMETHING OR OTHER, 1888.

DEAR LUCY,—

Your messengers arrived yesterday, but I had to keep them waiting for an answer and now they are impatient to go. The station has been attacked — I think it began at the end of October, but I am muddled about dates. John and Mr. Bayley were killed on the second day. Anderson and I are only wounded: we are recovering, though my headaches are awful. Josiah is dead, tell Halima. Help has come at last. But don't come back this way. The Ruga-ruga are all

over Ugogo and there is fierce fighting in Nguru. The Masai fought splendidly on our side. Go on to the coast quick as you can, northern route. Can't write more now, but will send through more news to Unguja if I get the chance. Good-bye. John talked of nothing but you when he was dying. It's about broken my heart.

ANN JAMBLIN.

Lucy and Mrs. Stott looked at one another in horror and consternation as this note — written by a pencil that had been frequently moistened — fluttered to the ground from Lucy's nerveless fingers. She felt it was the only tribute to her husband's memory, to her real horror and remorse to assume a faintness she did not feel while Mrs. Stott led her dry-eyed to her tent and couch.

CHAPTER XII

THE ATTACK ON THE STATION

From Mrs. Anderson, E.A.M., to Mr. Callaway, Agent of East African Mission, Unguja.

Mbogo's Village,
Ulunga, Nguru,
Novr. 30, 1888.

DEAR MR. CALLAWAY,—

You may have heard some rumour of what has happened to us here. You will find much of it described in the letter I have written to Mr. John Baines's mother. You can read this letter. Read it and then take notes. You have several clerks and none of them with a broken head like mine, I'll be bound, and plenty of good pens, ink and stationery. All I've got to write on is some old ruled exercise books and no envelopes. Well, make up some sort of a letter out of what I've written to Mrs. Baines senior, and then send it to the headquarters of the Mission in London; and post the letter to her, Mrs. Baines, Tilehurst, Reading. Tell them I'm recovering and I'm going to stay here till I am relieved and even perhaps afterwards, supposing I and my husband get quite well. You may be surprised at my change of surname, having known me as Miss Jamblin. Just before the attack on our station (Hangodi) occurred I went through a religious form of marriage with Mr. Ebenezer Anderson. Mrs. John Baines had gone away — her husband sent her off to the coast in the charge of Consul Brentham — and I did not think it right to stay at the Mission with three men and me unmarried; so I

accepted Mr. Anderson's proposal. Mr. Baines married us, but as I supposed it wouldn't be legal without we were married again before the Consul at Unguja, we haven't lived together as man and wife, and won't till everything can be made right and proper. I only mention this in case either of us died.

You can also tell the big man at Unguja — Sir Godfrey Something — what has happened in case he cares to know. I don't suppose he does care. Those big pots always sneer at Nonconformist Missionaries. But I want him to know this. We should have all been killed and perhaps tortured and our station might have been utterly destroyed and our people carried off into slavery if it hadn't been first for the Masai, and most of all for an old Arab, Ali bin Ferhan — I think he spells his name. He's written it in Arabic on the piece of paper I enclose. He lives at Momoro, near the Lingani River. Well, for reasons too long to give he no sooner heard we were going to be attacked by the Ruga-ruga and the black Arabs (they were led by that limb of the Devil, Ayub bin Majidi, whom they nickname Mnazi-moja) than he came to our assistance. Mbogo and his people deserve a gold medal — not that any one will give it — they're only "Wa-shenzi" and we're only Nonconformists; they fought splendidly; but they were just giving way when this old Arab — just like a picture of Abraham he is — came up with a lot of his people armed with guns and carrying flags. And he called off the fighting. After that the Ruga-ruga and their leaders simply disappeared with all the plunder they could carry and we have been at peace ever since, with Ali bin Ferhani camped here and keeping guard over Ulunga. Ali doesn't like the Germans. He always wanted his beloved "Ekkels"— I suppose he means Sir James Eccles — to take the country for the English Queen. But he thinks bad will come if any white people are killed. He is so afraid the Germans

will think he joined with the other Arabs that I now tell you all this, though every day I have a splitting headache. I really began this letter a week ago. I write a little every day, and now I think Ali will be able to get it sent through to the coast, to Mvita, perhaps.

The other letter — an exercise book tied up — is for Mrs. John Baines. I don't think any one ought to see it but herself. So please put it into an envelope and address it to her "To await arrival at Unguja." She started off for the Mvita coast with Captain Brentham a month ago. What's happened to her I don't know. I sent messengers to tell her her husband was dead.

I saw Mrs. Stott here last July when Mrs. John Baines had her premature confinement. Since then I only know that their station at Burungi was destroyed, but they got away safely somewhere else, where the Consul and Mrs. Baines afterwards found them.

Yours in the love of Jesus,

ANN ANDERSON.

P.S. I ought perhaps to be more business-like, in spite of feeling so ill, in case there is any trouble about wills and say that their names were *Thomas Aldrich Bayley* and *John Baines* and that they died as near as I can reckon on October 29th, 1888. I haven't found any wills, but I am trying to get their effects together, though of course there is great confusion after the looting. I've also written a note for old Mrs. Bayley.

From Mrs. Anderson, E.A.M., to Mrs. John Baines, c/o Mr. Callaway, Agent, East African Mission, Unguja.

Mbogo's Village,
Ulunga,
November, 1888.

DEAR LUCY,—

I am beginning to write this as near as I can guess

November 15, but I've got out in my dates and no wonder. I've also got a broken head — I expect a touch of concussion besides a scalp wound — and it is simple agony to write for long. My eyes hurt so. I must however try to tell you — and John's mother — what has happened, so I shall write a little every day if I am fit to and send these letters to the coast by the first chance. Ali bin Ferhani thinks he can manage a messenger later on who would cross into the British "sphere." I expect you got my first message sent by the Masai? In case you didn't or in case something happens to me and I can't finish a long letter, I'll tell you the plain facts first: *John's dead, Bayley's dead, Josiah's dead.* Anderson and I are wounded. I'm nearly well. The station is only partially destroyed. Now you know the worst.

When I returned here from Burungi it was about the tenth of October, so far as we could keep count. John was very angry with me at first, for leaving you and for coming to live with three men and I a single woman. I well-nigh lost patience with him. But I said, Well if *that's* all I'll marry one of you, I'll marry Ebenezer if he'll have me. Ebenezer Anderson didn't look overjoyed, but John said: That's all right; you came out to marry him, so the Mission expected, and you're only now fulfilling the contract. All right, I said, you're a minister of the Gospel, you could marry us at home, so you can do it here, only it won't be legal till we're re-married at the Consulate. But it'll be a marriage in God's eyes, which is the great thing. I felt reckless about it somehow. Of course I'm not going to live with Eb until all this trouble's over and everything is legal. Well, after that was done with, the country round seemed to be getting jumpy and Mbogo sent to say the Ruga-ruga under that Devil, Ayub, were coming to attack us, coming with lots of men and guns.

So we sent out word to the Masai, and they turned up well. About three hundred spears. But after a bit they got tired of waiting, so went off somewhere else to do some raiding on their own account.

Towards the end of October — perhaps it was the 28th — no sooner was our first bell rung for dressing — half-past five — than we heard the most unearthly yelling and a tremendous firing of guns. I just got my clothes and boots on anyhow and the men turned out in shirts and trousers and with their boots unlaced. The bullets were flying like hail above the stockade, first of all too high. We dared not go to peep through for fear of being shot. Well, John didn't lose his head one bit. He gave out the Sniders to all our Walunga who could use them, and he and Bayley and Anderson took up the posts they had settled beforehand.

Then the Ruga-ruga made a rush almost up to the ditch which they seemed not to expect, and John and the men let them have it. Five or six were killed. After that Mbogo's Walunga came up and took them on the flank with guns and spears, and they didn't like it at all and withdrew for a spell. But I can't tell you everything — Perhaps some day I will if you ever care to hear it — I've got to write to John's mother as well as you.

The fighting in the afternoon was chiefly between the Ruga-ruga and Mbogo's villages. I suppose they thought they'd better finish *them* off before they came again to us. They drove Mbogo's people out of all their villages except the big one near us, where Mbogo lives. This was higher up, and Mbogo and John had worked at its fortification on Captain Brentham's plan — it turned out to be much more easily defended than our place. Fortunately also the Ruga-ruga and the Arabs don't like fighting at night — Oh my headache, I must leave off for a bit. . . .

Well, during that night we worked like Trojans — Who were the Trojans and why did they work hard? You ought to know with your superior education. We dug out a square pit in the middle of the station and lined it with dry grass. In it we arranged chairs and mattresses so that we could rest and sleep here out of reach of the bullets. We also turned the Chapel into a living-house and store, because its brick walls and iron roof made it secure against fire and fairly safe from bullets.

On the second day the Ruga-ruga, led on by Ayub, attacked us on the west side, where our stockade was weakest and where we were overlooked a little by that mound we used to call the Snakes's Hill. Brother Bayley was standing talking to me about some dressings he wanted for Josiah Briggs who had been shot in the foot, when suddenly he uttered a shriek, whirled round and fell at my feet. He died a few minutes afterwards. John was so infuriated at his death that in spite of my shouts to be careful, he climbed up to a look-out post and fired his double-barrelled sporting rifle at a group of Ruga-ruga on Snakes's Hill. Whilst he was stooping to reload a poisoned arrow struck him on the chest and penetrated his lung. A good many of the Ruga-ruga were Manyema savages, slaves of the Arabs, and they fought with bows and poisoned arrows. John scrambled down somehow on to the ground. Ebenezer Anderson helped me to carry him into the pit shelter and there we undressed him. He was streaming with blood and coughing up blood and fast losing consciousness. Somehow or other — oh, what a time it was! — we got the arrow-head out of the wound. I don't know even now how, for we were both of us bunglers and it had got partly wedged in the ribs. And we had to cut the poor dear about. Fortunately we had Bayley's instruments down with us

in this pit. But I can't go into all these details. Shall I ever get this letter finished?

Whilst we were attending to John we heard a tremendous shouting. It was the Humba war song — the Masai, you know. They had come at last to our assistance and taken the Ruga-ruga rather by surprise. But just before they made their rush up the hill, the Ruga-ruga had contrived to shoot arrows with flaming cotton soaked in oil on to our thatched roofs. Fire was spreading from building to building except the Chapel and the store. My Big-geru had lost their heads. Up to that time they had been so good. Our Walunga were trying to open the doors of the stockade and dash out into the open country. Then the Ruga-ruga would have broken in and all would have been up with us. Fortunately the charge of the Masai came at that very moment, when I was beginning to doubt if God had not forgotten us. They killed lots of the Ruga-ruga and would hack off their heads and throw them back into our stockade.

Then the Ruga-ruga seemed to get reinforcements from the Ugogo direction — quite a large body of men, they say, led by two Arabs — the two Arabs whom John had got expelled a year ago by Mbogo for trading in slaves. They had got a small cannon and its noise and the landing of a stone cannon ball in the middle of a party of Masai gave them a fright, so that all of the Masai drew off from near our station and ran round to the high ground behind Mbogo's town. Once more it seemed as though nothing could save us. The Ruga-ruga fired stone balls at our stockade and seemed making up their minds to a rush.

Ebenezer was just splendid at this time. I'm not sorry now I agreed to marry him, though the poor dear is still pretty bad and hardly right in his mind yet. But just at this critical moment he and Josiah and five

of our men who knew how to handle guns kept up such a fire with the rifles that they shot down several of the big men among the enemy. Then poor Josiah was shot in the stomach and died an hour or two afterwards. Ebenezer got a splinter of wood in his eye — through a cannon ball striking a post near him, and he was put out of action for a bit. Meantime nothing more happened. There was a lull. The Ruga-ruga drew off out of sight.

I could think of nothing but John all this time, though I had a feeling of being stunned and hurt myself. He recovered consciousness and talked of no one but you. I think he thought you were with him all the time, and I confess *that* hurt me. It was Lucy my darling, my own true wife — and I wondered whether you *were* — and Lucy you've come back and now we'll go home together. . . . He didn't mention my name *once*, and I can't remember that he said a word about God. Perhaps he didn't know he was dying. Towards the last his body swelled dreadfully and he sank into a stupor. He must have died just about sunset. When he was going I seemed to be going too. I suppose I fainted, for when one of my Big-geru came down into the pit with some broth she'd made she set up a howling and a yelling saying we were both dead, that Bwana Fulata, as they called John, had taken me with him.

My girls undressed me and found then that I had been wounded all the time. A slug or a rusty nail fired out of one of the guns had ripped across my shoulders and the back of my head and I'd never noticed it. It must have been when Eb and I were helping John down into the pit — I thought some one then had given me a push. And while I sat beside John the blood had soaked all the back of my bodice and caked quite hard. It's left a kind of blood-poisoning, but I'm getting over it. Only it causes these awful

headaches. And poor Eb before the fighting finished got hit in the arm, and then from our clumsy attempts to extract the iron filings which had struck him he got blood-poisoning too, much worse than me. I can't say what his temperature went up to because I can't find any of our clinical thermometers, but to judge from his ravings it must have been pretty high.

In the night following that second day, Mbogo came with a lot of his headmen and took us three away and all our Big-geru to inside his own village and put us in his women's quarters. *He's* a white man if you like, under his skin. He was afraid we might all be burnt to death by the fire spreading inside our station. So we should have done. I lost my senses that night from weakness or shock or something. When I came to again I could hardly move my head for pain. But my girls bathed me and gave me wonderful potions of their own making and I was able to sit up. Mbogo came in, but spoke behind the door for modesty. What do you think of that in a black savage? A "Mshenzi"! Because he thought I might be undressed. But he said in Swahili: "Fear no more. Your friends are coming."

The next morning I heard that Ali bin Ferhani, who'd been a friend of John's — you remember? — had come with a big party of his followers, and hearing he was on his way the Ruga-ruga had bolted because they all respect him as a "Sheikh." He says he is going to stop here with his men till peace comes, or at any rate till white people take command here.

Your Masai messengers came two days after Ali bin Ferhani had arrived, and I wrote with great difficulty the message I sent you and got the Big-geru to do it up for me. Some of them write quite nicely themselves now, but only in Kagulu.

There's lots and lots more I could tell you if we ever meet again or I ever have time and plenty of paper.

After the Ruga-ruga were gone and the fires were beaten out my Big-geru searched in the Chapel and the ruins of the school houses and found three copy-books and a stone bottle of ink and some pens. I've used nearly a copy-book each for you and John's mother and a bit of a one writing to Mr. Callaway and a short note to Mr. Bayley's mother. I haven't made a proper search yet, but I can't find any will left by John. I don't suppose he had much to leave you.

You'd better go now and marry your Captain. It's the least he can do after compromising you, whether it was his fault or not. You never loved John as he deserved to be loved and you did wrong to become engaged to him, as his mother always said. If you hadn't been there he'd have married me. And we should have been happy as happy because I'd have slaved for him. I loved him from the time we first met, because he was kind and polite to me even though I was not well favoured. He never laughed at my hymns as you used to do. They may have been rubbish, but I meant well. In those days I was that religious it had to come out somehow. I said I loved the Lord and I did — I thought. I ain't so sure about it now. His ways are truly *past finding out* and I've given up trying, though I shall stick to Mission work for John's sake. John would have said the coming of Ali bin Ferhani was providential, but why couldn't Providence have acted a bit sooner and saved John and Brother Bayley? I suppose we shall know some day. . . .

Well, good-bye, Lucy. Let me have a line to say you got this packet. I've no envelope to put it in.

I was going to finish up with Yours in the love of Jesus, but I really don't know. . . .

ANN ANDERSON.

P.S. If you ever get to England and back Reading

way, give my love to the Miss Calthorps and go in and see my Uncle at the shop and say I'm trying to do my duty out here and he isn't to bother. I think perhaps you'd better not go near Mrs. Baines — John's mother. You never know how she'll take things. She was that *set* on John.

December 1.

Ali bin Ferhani's pretty sure to-day he can get these letters through, so off this goes. I forgot to say that we're going to bury John and Mr. Bayley side by side in the pit we dug in the middle of the station. Eb is not in a fit state to be consulted, though his temperature seems going down. But I've decided for him. As soon as I can get about without too much aches and pains I shall see it done. If you get home you might communicate with the East African Mission and arrange for a Stone to be sent out to be put up over the grave. Somehow it seems to me John wants to be buried there. It may bring good luck to Hangodi.

ANN.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RETURN TO UNGUJA

UP the scarcely-discernible path they climbed, leaving the Happy Valley behind them; over the foothills and under cliff at the base of the northern escarpment, where the gaily flowering bushes in their early spring display gave way to tall forest trees, hung with lianas. The black Colobus monkeys with their white-plumed tails chattered and showed their teeth and flopped from branch to branch in the leafy canopy, not used to this tumultuous invasion of their solitudes. Then suddenly the escarpment rose like the wall of a Babel towering into Heaven. How could any way for human beings walking on two legs be found up these precipices? But despite its savagery there is scarcely one of Africa's fastnesses that has not been trodden by man, and although the practised route into the Happy Valley was from the south, and though its encompassing walls of cliff on either side and at the northern end of its lake seemed impassable, there were ways up and over them known to the Masai and Hamitic and Nilotic peoples of this sequestered rift valley.

Up some such *Via mala* the Masai guides were now leading Brentham's caravan, with little concern for the trepidation it caused. The white man and woman and the silently suffering Goanese cook had been obliged to descend from their donkeys and trudge with the porters. The donkeys, in fact, were sent to the rear of the procession, and Brentham walked in front with the guides and a few disencumbered porters to help Lucy over an ascent which would have been

thought rough climbing in the Alps, and here had to be made without any paraphernalia of ropes and irons.

Lucy sometimes had to shut her eyes and hold her body rigidly pressed against the wall of rock that she might recover from vertigo and continue with shaking legs her ascent of a twisting path, sometimes only fifteen inches broad where it overhung an abyss. Roger was beside himself with anxiety. He cast about in his mind for safeguards — Ropes? But they had none. Lengths of cotton cloth? But how get at them and apply them, when any extra movement might turn Lucy giddy and precipitate her into the tree-tops far below? Their taciturn Masai guides, pledged only to show them the way to Kilimanjaro, had given them no warning of what the path was like from the lake shore, between three and four thousand feet above sea level, to the top of the escarpment at seven thousand feet.

Once committed to the ascent the caravan had to continue, as there was no room in which to turn the donkeys round and descend again to the valley. All Roger could do was to insist on great deliberation in the climb and frequent halts, though this policy was not endorsed by the impatient asses behind. When the white people in front paused to negotiate some more than usually dangerous section of the path, the rest of the caravan had to pause too, the porters with their loads poised on their heads and their sinewy legs trembling with the strain, while the donkeys pranced with impatience to pass them, and nearly pushed some of them and their loads over into the gulf below.

"It's no good," Roger would say to his companion, "you can't get round this, walking upright; you must go on hands and knees and *crawl* over it. Never mind your dress or your knees. If your skirt is torn I'll make you one out of buck-skin; if your knees are cut it's better than breaking your neck."

He had never lived through such a nightmare as this

climb, and ran down in sweat for sheer apprehension of an irretrievable disaster. However it came to an end at last, and towards that end its difficulties were tempered by the path's entry into gorges where there were merciful bays of level ground, places to rest in and stretch oneself, to put down the loads and regain one's breath and ease one's palsied legs. From the jagged rocks grew out horizontally fleshy-leaved aloes with zebra markings of green and white, and long stalks of blood-red or orange-yellow, tubular flowers, haunted by large yellow-velvet bees with probing tongues. Huge blue-black ravens with arched bills and white collars perched on pinnacles of rock above the path, or set out to sail in circles over the gorge below, hoping no doubt some beast or human would fall and die and provide sightless eyeballs and protruding entrails for the ravens' feast.

Lucy thought of this in these silent halts — all were too exhausted to speak — and shuddered. Yet for a white woman of that period, unsuitably costumed as she was, she gave no more trouble to her male companion than she could help, uttered no futile complaints or queries. They had exchanged but little conversation during the two days which had elapsed since they received Ann Jamblin's message. John Baines's ghost, like a Banquo, came between them. Lucy was — and looked as though she was — in perfect health. Deep down within her heart she was quietly content, convinced now that somehow, some day, she would marry Roger. Equally certain was she that none of the ordinary dangers of African travel would prevent her from reaching the coast under his escort; so that he had in her a more cheerful and far less sulky or doleful companion than had accompanied the unfortunate John on his wedding tour.

After the ascent of the escarpment they camped two nights in succession in a strange region suggestive of

the Moon's surface as revealed by a powerful telescope. There were the crumbling sides of craters, the cones of extinct volcanoes — extinct, perhaps; but sometimes a strange and ominous-looking white smoke or gassy vapour issued from cracks in the ground and through veins in the obsidian rocks. Vegetation was very scanty — a few yellow stalks of bamboo in the hollows; and water was scarce enough to cause anxiety and limit washing to a minimum. Yet if they could cross this dry belt of naked rock and barren mountain and the possibly waterless plain that lay in front of them, to the east there was a promise of better things. Far away, a blue pyramid seen against the morning sun, was Mount Meru, one of the great, unmistakable landmarks of East Africa. It towered fifteen thousand feet into the sky and when the sun turned to the zenith and the west they could see the peak of the pyramid was white with snow. And behind Meru in the early morning or in the early evening there came into view something at first unbelievable, a floating island in the sky, a Laputa: the great snowy dome of Kibô. . . .

A few days of rough, silent travel — seeing no natives and very few birds and beasts — and they were in the Kisongo plains. Here it was less arid, and beneath the burnt stems of the old grass the fresh green grass was springing. The occasional scrubby trees and bushes were putting forth fresh leaves, sometimes quite red in colour, or even purplish black. Big game swarmed round them unafraid of man, inclined even to be insolent. Rhinoceroses charged the caravan and both Lucy and Roger had narrow escapes of being tossed on their horns, while Lucy was twice flung from her donkey when it bolted with terror at a tangent from the unexpected rush of the squealing monster. An Nyamwezi porter was gored and trampled, his load smashed and the caravan disorganized. Roger laid low one rhinoceros; and then, water being near, they

spent all the rest of that day and the next cutting up its flesh, smoking it, drying it in the sun, and making of it a food provision greatly wanted by the porters.

This much-needed rest however brought another danger on them. The sound of rifle firing, the assemblage of vultures, the noise of the porters' excited voices attracted the attention of a large war party of Masai, trailing southward to see what was up in this rumoured war between the Arabs — or, as they called them, the "coast" people — and the White men . . . troubled waters in which they might fish to advantage. Lucy was sitting in camp in as much placid enjoyment as she could feel, with the remembrance of John's death in the background. She forgot, at any rate for the moment, her remorse and her anxieties "as to what people would say." It was very pleasant to rest here and to know that she would not have to rise at five the next morning and ride nearly all day, and perhaps have another close shave from a charging rhinoceros. . . .

Gradually there stole on her ear a sound like distant thunder. The sky was clear . . . surely it couldn't be a whole *herd* of rhinos, or a distant earthquake — earthquakes not being unknown in this region? Presently the Wanyamwezi looked up anxiously from their camp employments or their parcelling out of the rhinoceros meat. Roger was away, shooting more game. . . . There went up the fear-inspiring word: "Masai!"

Then appeared on the north a cloud of red dust and out of this emerged a small army of red-coloured men trailing their shields by lanyards, with a rumbling noise, waving long-bladed white-flashing spears, and uttering a growling chant, a war-song of bloodthirsty purport, though its words were not understood by the people in the undefended camp.

The Swahili Kiongozi fortunately was on the spot, and then and at other times never lost his head. He

stood quietly beside Lucy, who was seated in her deck-chair with her white umbrella to shade her from the sun. "Starehe, Bibi," he said; "usiogope; Muungu anatulinda. Hawa ndio Masai, kweli; walakini tut-awashinda na akili." [1]

The porters just stayed where they were. To have started to run would — they knew — have been fatal. They just stood about, silent, while the advancing army — perhaps three hundred in number — suddenly halted and lay down behind their large, gaily-painted shields. The two men of the expedition who knew the Masai language drew up to the Kiongozi — unfortunately the Masai guides were away, out hunting with Roger. A hundred yards distant there stood out one superb Masai warrior, the leader of the party; a naked figure of perfect manhood, red in colour, with a naturally brown skin, raddled with ochre and powdered with the dust of the red ground. The vertical sun seemed to make a red halo round the outline of his beautiful body. He held a tuft of grass in his hand and shouted in an authoritative voice: "Tôtŏna!" (Sit down!)

At once the men of Brentham's caravan obeyed him. All sat down and plucked tufts of fresh green grass. Then the Masai spokesman advanced slowly . . . wonderingly . . . peeringly towards the white woman, reclining on the deck-chair. "What is *this?*" he asked the headman and the two interpreters. "This," they replied, glad to get a chance of making an impression, "*this* is a WHITE WOMAN of the great race of the Wa-ingrezi. Her husband is the great chief, the Balozi of the Wa-ingrezi on the coast. We come now from the Manyara country, guided by your own people, the Masai. There is war to the south, in Nguru and Ugogo, war between the Lajomba and the White men.

[1] "Be tranquil, Lady. Do not fear. God is guarding us These indeed are Masai truly, but we shall overcome them with intelligence."

Our Balozi is taking his wife to the coast to put her with his own people; then he will return and finish the Lajomba."

"Good," said the Masai war-captain. "We heard of this war and we are going there to see if we can join in. We hate the Lajomba."

At this moment there was a stir among the three hundred warriors sitting apart. It was caused by the approach of Brentham, filled with apprehension and anxiety as to Lucy. Unfortunately his own Masai guides belonged to a southern clan of the Masai, not on very good terms with this more northern, purer breed. So there was a ruffle of angry words as each realized the other as whilom foes. But the leader who had been sitting close to Lucy rose to his feet and spoke with a carrying voice — rather than shouted — a command and once more his warriors sat down. He then took Lucy's hand, but quite gently. His own hand had well-trimmed nails and was clean except for the red dust. He turned back her sleeve a little (she trembled, but tried to smile). Having satisfied himself that the arm was even whiter than the hand, he threw back his head and laughed a full-throated laugh, while his eyes sparkled with the wonderment of it all. Seeing her smile he looked at her with such a friendly glance that she felt completely reassured. Then he sat down again, took snuff, and was framing other questions when Roger strode up. "It is all well, master," said the headman hurriedly in Swahili.

"Why, you're holding quite a court, Lucy," said Roger, inwardly immensely relieved.

"Ye-es. But I shall be *rather* glad when they all go."

The Masai leader rose to his feet and held out his hand to Brentham. The latter took it and White man and Red man looked for a moment into each other's eyes. Roger, knowing something of Masai customs —

was he not indeed but three or four marches from scenes of earlier exploration? — did not shrink away when the Masai captain spat on his clothing and on Lucy's dress. He knew it was intended for the friendliest of greetings, a seal on their good relations.

After that, all was boisterous good-fellowship, though the Wanyamwezi porters were careful to keep together and half carelessly to reclaim their rifles. The three hundred Masai agreed to overlook the fact that Roger's guides had belonged to a once hostile clan. And when they learnt from these men what a hunter he was and what an unerring shot, they pressed their friendship and their red presence on him. They visited his tent — they were throughout strictly honest — they sat on his bed, and he had afterwards to do without sheet and pillow case, for besides leaving red dust wherever they sat they distributed a flavour of tallow from their favourite unguent, mutton fat. They insisted on blood-brotherhood and declared they would escort the white chieftain and his lady to the coast.

As a matter of prosaic fact, they took him no farther than the base of Meru. There the rainy season began to break with vehemence. So there they left him and went off to the drier steppe country and the War in the south with its possibilities of loot.

Roger longed at this time to ascend Meru and explore its hidden wonders; and Lucy gazed with awe at the now fully displayed majesty of Kilimanjaro, rising above the watery plain of Kahé, with its dome of snow and ice, and its lesser peak of Kimawenzi.

But being short of stores they made straight for a newly-founded Evangelical Mission station, at an altitude of four thousand feet, where it was hoped Lucy might find shelter for a few days from the torrential rains, and he himself gather news about the happenings on the coast, and dispatch carriers to Mvita with messages which might be telegraphed to Unguja.

After all their adventures this seemed rather a prosaic phase in the journey, and Lucy found herself actually depressed at being once more with fellow-countrymen. There were three missionaries — a married couple and an assistant bachelor propagandist — at the station of the Evangelical Mission, but they did not seem over surprised at this arrival of a white man and woman from the unknown interior. They received Lucy's halting explanations civilly but coldly, and though they gave her a room to herself and nicely cooked meals, they seemed — to her fancy — to have purposely adopted an almost penitentiary surfeit of services and prayers.

Captain Brentham preferred to camp out at the Chief's village, two miles away. He had known this genial, old, one-eyed ruffian three years before, when he was exploring the approaches to the great Snow Mountain, and making tentative treaties to forestall the Germans. He rather ground his teeth over the changing scene. Since his first journey, missionaries, big-game sportsmen, concession hunters, had thronged into this wonderful country, and had not the slightest respect for its earliest pioneers. Already there was a large and flourishing mission station on the site of his first camp; and when on installing Lucy there he had drawn the missionaries' attention to this fact, and to his having made the site ready for them, purchased it in fact, the present occupants merely said with pursed lips, "Indeed?"; and Mrs. Missionary added primly: "Yes: we *heard* from the Chief you had stayed here, three years ago; but we prefer *never* to listen to *gossip* about white people. It is so *often ill-natured.*"

And so onwards to the Taita Hills and the coast. A sense of flatness, a leaking-out of all romance in their adventure. They were no longer alone. Lucy went to see Mr. Thomas at the East African Mission station in Taita. He startled her by asking cheery questions

about John, his old college-mate, and supposing John was with her on this *safari*. He had heard nothing about the disaster and made rather stupid and inquisitive inquiries as to the motives of her journey. Farther on, they had the misery of crossing the red Maungu desert, with its stretch of forty miles between water and water; but there was no "adventure" about this; and midway they met the caravan of a very rich Englishman with two companions, wearing single eyeglasses, who offered them champagne and soda-water at midday to relieve their thirst, and told Lucy he wasn't surprised at her travelling about with a stray Consul, as he always contended that missionaries out in Africa had a jolly good time and did themselves uncommonly well, and for his part he didn't blame her. "Gather ye roses, don't you know — while you can — or was it while you're young? And now I suppose you're on your way back to Hubby?"

The old Arab port of Mvita was not much altered since Roger had seen it last; though there was the beginning of a stir, for a British Chartered Company was preparing to make this their head-quarters. Meantime, the centre of rank and fashion, so to speak, was the British Consulate. Roger made his way here, with Lucy and Halima, while he left the bulk of his caravan encamped across the water.

His colleague, the Vice-Consul, was an ex-Naval Officer, who had given up the Navy for a while to serve in the East African Consulates, in the idea that they entailed little office work, good pay, and any amount of shooting, varied with agreeable *safaris* at the expense of the Government. This particular example of his kind had been rather sharply called back to more humdrum duties and the preparation of statistics by Roger himself, when he was acting Consul-General. So now was the time to get his own back: —

"*Hullo,* old chap! *Who'd* have thought it. Where

have *you* sprung from? We'd all given you up for lost — thought you'd gone 'Fanti,' eloped with a missionaryess for the far interior and were founding an empire on your own. . . ."

"I've brought here," interrupted Roger, with a set face, "*Mrs. John Baines*" (Lucy had retreated out of ear-shot with Halima to the verandah of the Consulate) —"*Mrs. John Baines,* whose husband has been killed, I fear, in the Ulunga country. I should be much obliged if you could put her up here till we can get a dau to take us over to Unguja. . . . As for me . . ."

"*Aw*fully sorry old chap. *Of course,* I can make room for *you* . . . give you *some* sort of a shake-down. . . . You're a fellow *man* and you'll understand. . . . But the fact is I'm — I'm not — quite prepared — er — to entertain a white lady here. Bachelor establishment you know. . . . *You* twig? . . . Dare say you're fixed up just the same at — where is it? at Medina, What?"

Roger turned away angrily.

"Lucy! . . . Mrs. Baines!"

"Yes, Captain Brentham."

"I'll get a boat and we'll go over to the Mission station across the Bay. I expect they'll have room — indeed they must *make* room — for you there till our dau is ready to sail. . . ."

Then turning to the Vice-Consul: "Be good enough to send a cablegram to-day to the Agency at Unguja stating that H.M. Consul for Zangia arrived here this morning from the interior with Mrs. John Baines from Ulunga, and add that I shall arrive at Unguja to report as soon as I can charter a dau; unless a gun-boat comes in first. My Camp is at Kisolutini. You can send on any letters that come for me there. . . ."

"Well, but I say . . ."

Roger having been joined by the wondering and dis-

appointed Lucy, who had taken a great fancy to the picturesque Consulate, strode out with an angry face, flushed under the tan.

No return message came for him from the Agency at Unguja. And a few days afterwards he embarked with Lucy and Halima (who had already agreed to marry the Goanese cook), his Wanyamwezi porters, and a selected collection of trophies and mineralogical specimens, in an Arab dau, for the island port of Unguja. This time — December 27, 1888 — Lucy was too anxious about her future to notice or to care whether it had bugs or not in its rotting timbers or its frowsy thatch.

Meantime, unfriendly forces were at work to Roger's detriment. Here is a letter which Mrs. Spencer Bazzard probably wrote to Mr. Bennet Molyneux, of the Foreign Office. (Like most of the letters appearing in this book, it is based on my deductions as to the kind of letter that would have been written under the circumstances, rather than on textual evidence) : —

H.B.M. Consulate for Zangia,
Medinat-al-Barkah,
December 23, 1888.

DEAR MR. MOLYNEUX,—

I hope you don't resent my letters. You don't answer them, but then I told you not to. I shouldn't like to be a bore to you, or for you to feel — amid your piles of work — that you had an extra letter to write to an importunate little person in far-off East Africa. I said once I should go on writing every now and again, unless you ordered me to stop. As you haven't — Well! Here is another budget of East African news.

We have had alarums and excursions, as Shakespeare says. You will see by this address that I am on the mainland with my husband. When Captain B. dis-

appeared last September into the *ewigkeit* the Agency at Unguja began receiving disquieting stories as to what was taking place in his absence. He had only left an Indian clerk in charge, and complaints arose from Indian merchants and English missionaries that no one could attend to their business. So Sir G.D. thought it best to send Spence over here to take charge, and, of course, I came with him to help him to interpret.

We found everything (a month ago) in a terrible muddle. The consulate is filthily dirty, the archives are just anyhow, and Spence fears a considerable sum is missing from the Consular receipts, or else that the clerk is muddled in his accounts. But all this you will hear officially.

Meantime, we are all uneasy about Captain B.'s disappearance. He left here last August with some idea of letting the missionaries know there was danger of an Arab attack on all white people independent of their nationality, German or English. He seems to have translated Sir G.'s brief instructions into a permission to make a vast tour of the interior — a delightful thing to do, no doubt, but not when you have a Consulate to look after. He greatly alarmed all the missionaries, and, as it appears, somewhat needlessly. Those who have their stations in Usagara and farther south are very angry with him. He arrived at their stations early in September and ordered them to retire on the coast — or at any rate send their wives and children there, as the Arabs might attack at once. And after they had obeyed him the attacks never came off! One of the missionary ladies was in a certain condition, it appears, and the hurried journey so upset her that — how shall I phrase it? — her hopes were disappointed.

He next appeared at a place called Hangodi — according to native report — and was so anxious about the safety of a fair lady there (the missionary young

woman who travelled out with him and me a year and a half ago) — that he took her away with him and has seemingly gone waltzing off to the unknown with this fair charge. Quite romantic, isn't it? In this case his warning as to an impending attack seems to have been only too well founded, if what has been reported to the Germans is true. Soon after he left this place — Hangodi — it was apparently attacked and destroyed and the missionaries all killed — except, of course, the lady who left with him. Ill-natured people will naturally ask *why* he did not stay and defend the station.

It is only two days off Christmas, and I can picture to myself the happy preparations going on at Spilsbury — the carols the village children are practising for Christmas Day, and the Christmas-tree which I am sure Mrs. Molyneux and your daughter are preparing for their reward.

These ridiculous sentimental Germans are, of course, getting up Christmas-trees, too, and are practising Carols to be sung round them, though the town is still more or less besieged on the landward side. *Who* and *what* was Good King Wenceslaus, and why should we sing about him at Christmastide? There is no library here, except the one they have at the French Mission, and that mentions nothing about Germany.

We are told here that a certain Captain Wissmann will soon arrive with a large force of Sudanese soldiers to take command and finish the Arabs.

Still no news of Stanley, except it be the wildest, most improbable rumours. If he really emerges from the heart of Africa it will only be — I fear — to fall into some ambush laid by the Arabs.

With our united kindest regards and best wishes for 1889,

Believe me, dear Mr. Molyneux,
Yours sincerely,
EMILIA BAZZARD.

Roger and Lucy reached Unguja in their Arab dau at the end of December, when the Europeans therefore were recovering from the surfeit of Christmas junketings and preparing for another round of New Year festivities, but a little bit peevish and liverish in the interval. The arrival of the British Consul for Zangia was not unexpected, because telegraphic news of his emergence from the interior had already reached the British Agency. In the afternoon of December 29th he walked into the office of the Agency and reported himself to Sir Godfrey Dewburn. . . .

"Ah! my *dear* Brentham, *how* are you? *What* a time you must have had, to be sure! We all gave you up for lost, or thought you had gone in search of Stanley or Emin, or were off to attack the Mahdi. Well: and how is the fair companion of your travels, Mrs. — Mrs. . . . er . . ."

Brentham: "Mrs. John Baines? She is, I believe, at Mr. Callaway's at the present moment. I advised her to go there as he is Agent here for their Mission, and would probably have definite news about — about — the attack on her husband's station . . . and the results. Have you heard anything, Sir?"

Sir Godfrey: "Nothing more than the rumour that after you left it was attacked, and, I think, all the Whites were killed . . ."

At this moment a clerk comes in and says: "This is a note with an enclosure, Sir Godfrey, from Mr. Callaway." Sir Godfrey asks Brentham to be seated and hastily runs his eye over a very long communication. Five minutes elapse. Then whilst he is still reading, another door leading to the residential part of the Agency opens and there appears a handsome woman of middle age, with the stamp of elegance and fashion upon her, dressed in some agreeable adaptation of an Englishwoman's dress for the tropics. She says, "Godfrey, my dear, tea's ready and as you don't like

it drawn or cold I thought if I came myself — but I see you have a visitor. . . ."

"Oh! Ah! . . . Yes. . . . To be sure. . . . Er. . . . Brentham, this is Lady Dewburn —" (They shake hands. Lady Dewburn looks him over approvingly.) "You'd better come in and have tea with us and then we can talk over this extraordinary communication of Callaway's. It couldn't have come more appropriately. Evidently it must have been brought by your dau. It's been sent down by some Arab and it is all about the attack on the station where these missionary friends of yours were living. It seems they were *not* all killed, two of 'em at any rate . . . though I think the husband of your lady friend *was*. . . . But come along and we'll have a confab all about it. The Bazzards are over at your Consulate on the mainland, so whilst you're here you'd better take possession of their quarters. The golden-haired Emily says she left it in apple-pie order when she departed for Medina. . . . This way . . . would you like to wash your hands first? You look quite the Wild Man of Borneo, and I don't wonder. . . . *Must* have had a beastly time. . . . I should suggest a whisky and soda first and tea afterwards. . . ."

Lucy meantime was reading Ann Anderson's letter, given in a previous chapter. She had been placed once more in the bedroom she had occupied in Mr. Callaway's house before her marriage, and shuddered at the memories it enshrined. Dear, kind Mrs. Stott was far away in the Happy Valley . . . and she could never again hear John's voice calling to her from the courtyard under the great fig-trees that the Sultan's carriage was waiting hard-by to take them for a drive; or making some other proposition which she probably snubbed in fretfulness.

She was consumed with remorse. Ann's statement that in his last agonies, dying with poisoned blood, he

had only thought and spoken of *her,* made her heart ache, almost literally — the aching of unshed tears over the irrevocable. She had not been unfaithful to him in body; but in mind, in desire, *yes:* from the day of the marriage onwards, and never more so than from the day of her departure from Hangodi. She knew she had hoped then that somehow this departure, this desertion of John when danger was approaching — might be the beginning of her severance from him, and lead to her union with Roger. To *him* at any time during the long *safari* she would have surrendered herself. . . .

Yet though her upper consciousness — the "speaking to one's self" (which we almost do sometimes aloud, as if to an audience that may register our words and resolves) — asserted that the *only* reparation she *could* make was *never* to see Roger again — what a mercy he had behaved better than she had done!) — her innermost intention was to stay on in Unguja on some pretext or other, in the faint hope he might . . . *might* . . . "do the right thing," as Ann had put it . . . might marry her. If he would *only* do that her whole remaining life should be *one long atonement* to John. She would *never* forget him and his unselfish love of a shallow, ungrateful woman.

Mr. Callaway had hinted she might like to take the next steamer home: there was one going in a week — back to England. But how could she go back . . . and face Mrs. Baines . . . and live on her parents? John had probably no money to leave her; the Mission, after so short a term of married life, would certainly give her no pension . . . why should it? The post of National school-teacher at Aldermaston was long ago filled up. And could she even resume her life there? At no great distance was Engledene, with Lord and Lady Silchester. Lady Silchester she vaguely dreaded as a person who might mock at her.— She must have

heard something about her from Captain Brentham. What — what — *what* was she to do? Insist on remaining out in Africa and rejoin the Mission? And work under Ann? The thought of the altered circumstances repelled her. Who would care *now* if she were ill? She had had several illnesses and many fits of *malaise* — and tears of self-pity now ran down her cheeks. And how *good* and *uncomplaining* —— here choking sobs, hiccups, almost a loud wailing intervened —dear John had been. The cups of broth he had brought to her bedside, the little meals to tempt her appetite. . . . And Roger? . . . The equal solicitude — the interest *he* had shown, even in her whims!

* * * * *

The realization of her bereavement kept Callaway from intruding on her solitude, even by a message through Halima. This was a mercy, she thought — at first — because however well-meaning, he struck her fastidiousness as "common," not very attractive in appearance, with a harsh voice, and effluent piety, and bad table manners. . . . But need Halima have been *quite* so neglectful? Halima latterly was so wrapped up in the project of marrying the Goanese cook that she unhesitatingly neglected her mistress and avowed her complete readiness to enter the Roman Church if that act could remove Antonio da Silva e Andrade's last scruple of reluctance to wed with a Negress. She spent much of her time oiling and combing her fuzzy hair into a European coiffure, and did not hesitate to "borrow" details of Lucy's scanty wardrobe for her own adornment. When she came with Lucy's meals into the hot . . . *hot* . . . *hot* bedroom, with its dreadful insect swarms, from which the iron bedstead, with its lowered mosquito curtain, was almost the only refuge, she — Halima — bore a sulky face. She would evidently *not* stay with Lucy in misfortune. . . .

One way and another, Lucy was fretting and worry-

ing herself into a state of illness; afraid to go out or to show herself; loathing life in this low-ceilinged, vermin-infested bedroom, hot by day, stifling at night, as she lay inside the mosquito netting in the blackest darkness, shuddering at the possibilities beyond the bed. Rats romped and squeaked and occasionally fell from the rafters into the sagging mosquito net; scorpions, no doubt, were lurking in the crevices of the floor-boards to sting her toes if she stepped out of the insufferably hot bed. Cockroaches alternated their love-flights from the window with frantic and wily attempts to get under the curtain. Mosquitoes, all the night through, kept up a sonorous diapason of unbroken humming, indignant at being denied access to her body. And the loneliness! Halima was supposed to sleep on the landing outside; a polite supposition which Lucy was unwilling to test, lest inquiry should lead to a defiant withdrawal from her service. . . . Her service! Where were Halima's wages to come from?

* * * * *

It was ten a.m.— more or less. Lucy had risen, washed hurriedly, and hurriedly put on the only clean cotton dress left to her. (She really must go out one day and buy some things for the voyage — only where was the money?) The door was thrown open by an excited, more amiable Halima, who shouted "*Yupo Bibi Balozi!* Anakuita!"

A pleasant, high-bred voice explained:

"I am looking for Mrs. Baines. Is she in here?"

Lucy scrambled off the bed from under the mosquito curtain and stood before Lady Dewburn, the Consul-General's wife. . . .

Broken apologies . . . explanations —"Bed only place where you could be tolerably free from mosquitoes. . . ."

Lady Dewburn is a handsome shrewd-looking

woman of middle age. She wears a single eyeglass at times, for greater precision of sight, and because she is the daughter of a permanent official. But though she inspires a certain awe, she is in reality a kind creature, irresistibly impelled to interfere — she hopes for the best — in other people's affairs, especially out here. Her children are either out in the world or at school in England, and she is exceedingly bored on this feverishly tropical, gloriously squalid island. The day before she had heard all about Lucy from Captain Brentham. . . .

Lady Dewburn: "My *poor* child! *Please* overlook all formalities and come away with me, *just as you are.* Your woman here — if you can trust her — shall pack up what you have — you can't have *much,* I should think, after that *appalling* journey to the coast. . . . Come away with me. . . . Why, you must have hardly *any* clothes to wear! I don't *wonder* you stop in bed! We've got lots of spare rooms — as a matter of fact, Sir Godfrey and I are alone just now. Come and stay with us till you can look round and make your plans. It seems to me as though I ought to put you to bed for a week to begin with. . . ."

Lucy's acceptance of this Fairy Godmother proposal dissolved from words into gulping sobs and convulsive eye-dabbings and nose-blowing. But she was practical enough to find her sola topi and white umbrella, to make her cotton dress look a little tidier, and gasp a few directions in Swahili to the over-awed Halima. Halima was wearing Lucy's evening "fichu" all the time and was uneasily conscious of having blundered into felony through ill-timed contempt for her lady.

Lucy observed none of this, but followed Lady Dewburn's fastidious steps down the stairs of palm planks out into the yard, where Mr. Callaway — really a very decent sort, who after all had done his best for Lucy — was awaiting them. He was personally grati-

fied and relieved in his mind that the first lady in Unguja should have taken his forlorn little client under her wing. After picking their way with skirts lifted high through narrow unsavoury lanes between high blank houses, they at last reached Unguja's one broad highway. Here was a handsomely appointed carriage, and in it they rolled away to the Agency.

CHAPTER XIV

LUCY'S SECOND MARRIAGE

From Sir Godfrey Dewburn, K.C.I.E., to Mr. Bennet Molyneux, African Department, Foreign Office.

H.M. Agency and Consulate-General,
Unguja,
March 15, 1889.

DEAR MOLYNEUX,—

In the matter of Brentham, I think a private letter to you might meet the case better than an exchange of cables or an official dispatch.

I quite understand your Department is annoyed at the questions put in Parliament last month after the news about the deaths at the Mission station at Hangodi. But I cannot help thinking the Department is disposed to be too hard on Brentham, as though it were prejudiced from some other quarter than me. I admit when I first came out here I jibbed a little at his cocksureness, his assumption that no one knew anything about Ungujan affairs to compare with his own knowledge; and it seemed to me he made rather a parade about the number of languages he had acquired, which contrasted unfavourably with my acquaintance — then — with only three (I have tried since to learn Swahili). And so on and so on. I moved easier and got my bearings better when I had sent him over to his proper sphere, the mainland. I also thought his contempt for the Bazzards a little too marked, though I must admit subsequently my wife and I have found that a little of Mrs. B. goes a long way. But I hate writing disagreeable things about anybody — a climate

like this excuses hair-dye, face-powder, irritability and even a moderate degree of illicit love (don't treat this as official!) . . . But about Brentham: if his mission to the missionaries — telling them to clear out before the Arab danger — *was* a failure, in that in most places there was no danger, *your* apprehensions and *my* instructions were to blame for starting Brentham off on his wild-goose chase. The missionaries in Usagara seem to cut up rough because they weren't attacked, were "quittes pour la peur." But that was hardly Brentham's fault.

The Hangodi business is a different matter. There is little doubt in my mind that B. was a little spoony on Mrs. Baines — They had travelled out together, and it seems she comes from near his part of the world in Berkshire-Hampshire — Jolly district, near the Carnarvons and the Silchesters.— Ever go there to shoot? But Mrs. Baines had been ill from one of these confinements that Missionary ladies — married, of course — have so regularly, and her husband seems really to have wished his wife to go away with Brentham. To make it all right and proper he packed off at the same time the other woman at their station, a strong-minded female named Jamblin. (She figures very much in the dispatches I sent home last mail.) Well: according to Brentham, this Jamblin woman, when they had done a few marches and stopped at another Mission station, insisted, positively *insisted* on going back to Hangodi, and equally insisted on *his* taking Mrs. Baines to the coast. He oughtn't to have agreed. That's where he was weak. He ought to have returned to Hangodi and helped to beat off the attack — if it came, as it did — and then have refused to take the ladies away unless the men came too. Instead of that, Brentham, having found some missionaries of whom he was in search, hung about their place

until the news of the attack on Hangodi and the death of Mrs. Baines's husband reached him. After that he made for the coast by the northern route, the only one open to him at that time without fighting. Even on this route they had some most extraordinary adventures and spent a devil of a time before they got back to civilization — as we call ourselves by contrast.

The general opinion among the missionaries, I know, is unfavourable to Mrs. Baines, and in consequence to Brentham. But Brentham swears to me on his honour — *and I believe him* — there was nothing "wrong" between them. Jennie — my wife — says he's as straight as a die; though never having seen a "die," I can't say. At any rate, Jennie, on whose judgment I always rely, has taken a great liking to Brentham. So she has also to the young party with whom he has become involved, this Mrs. John Baines. The poor girl — she doesn't look her age — 26 — was stranded here at their Mission Depôt, and Jennie, after hearing about her, went over in her impulsive way and brought her to the Agency. This has put a stopper on local gossip, which has thus been deprived of a rare morsel that would otherwise have acted as a real tonic on a fever-stricken community. Now Jennie says that although there's never been anything between them but what was right and proper, they ought to marry as soon as six months is up from the death of the first husband — which we presume took place on October 29th, from the accounts of that masterful person who now calls herself Ann Anderson. Jennie had but to make the suggestion and they both consented, so the civil marriage — the only legal one here — is fixed for March 31. Whether Archdeacon Gravening will consent to marry them at the Cathedral in addition, I cannot say. He is thinking it over. The matter has been

speeded up by your intimation that the F.O. intends to recall Brentham. If he went back and didn't marry her, things would go hardly with Mrs. Baines. (I really have taken a liking to her, and I could imagine when she gets to a good climate she might be quite pretty. She is very quiet, and in a quiet way is rather entertaining in her accounts of what they went through in their wild journey to the coast.)

Well: when the wedding is over, I propose breaking to him the F.O. instructions to return and give an account of himself. I must give him just enough time to go over to the mainland and try to settle things at his Consulate there. The Spencer Bazzards — who have a down on him — report that an utter muddle followed his departure for the interior last September, and accuse his Indian clerk of embezzling Consular funds, and, worse still, of selling the office cipher code to the Germans. This, if true, is a confounded nuisance, as it will oblige us to make changes all round. Fortunately it is only Cipher Q.

I suppose you know Captain Wissmann has arrived at Medina at the head of a force of over a thousand picked men to fight the Arabs to a finish? Other German officers have met him there with further contingents — Zulus and Makua. Wissmann's people are mainly Sudanese. I suppose we have done right in enabling him to raise this force on what is practically British territory — British or Portuguese? I like Wissmann personally. After all — as Brentham says — if we hadn't the pluck to take all East Africa for ourselves at the time we were first challenged by Bismarck, it is better that the German share should be properly controlled and not fall back into a state of anarchy and slave-raiding. But, of course, what ties our hands in all these matters is the intense desire of France to raise the Egyptian question to our disadvantage.— Therefore, don't think I am girding at the

Office for irresolution. The French here make my life a burden to me with their intrigues. . . .

* * * * *

Yours sincerely,
GODFREY DEWBURN.

From Lucy Brentham to Mrs. Albert Josling, Church Farm, Aldermaston.

Mbweni,
Unguja,
April 2, 1889.

DARLING MOTHER,—

I expect you got my letter written early in January after I had got back to Unguja. The news must have come to you as an awful shock. And what it has been to Mrs. Baines I dare not *think*. I expect I shall get some sort of answer from you in a day or two when the mail comes in. But as there is a steamer going to-morrow I dash off this letter to give you other news: *good* news this time, dearest.

I was married on March 31st last to Captain Roger Brentham, the Consul for the Mainland. You know all about him from my letters. It is true it is only a little more than six months since poor John died, and some people will think it much too soon afterwards to marry again, but you and Father will understand. Roger is shortly going home.— *Think* of it, darling mother! We are going — or should one say, "we are coming"? — HOME. I put it in capitals. He has wanted to marry me ever since we knew of John's death. We both feel sure John would think it the wisest thing to do, even Ann Jamblin does. Well, Roger being called back by the Foreign Office, he could hardly leave me behind here and if he hadn't asked me to marry him I couldn't have stopped here all by myself, unless I had joined some missionary society. And

that I didn't feel inclined to do. I don't think I'm suited for the work. But don't think I want *to run down* the Missionaries. Far from it, after all I've seen. Mission work quite changed John. It made him so *good* and *unselfish*. And although I've many reasons for feeling sore and angry about Ann Jamblin that was.— She isn't dead, but she's married in a sort of a way to that Ebenezer Anderson of our Mission.— Well, even Ann is twice the woman she was in old days at Tilehurst. They call her here — at least, the local paper does — It's run by an Eurasian — I'll tell you some day what Eurasian means . . . they call her "The Heroine of Hangodi." I believe somebody is going to write about her in the English papers; and the German commander on the mainland, Captain Wissmann — has sent her his compliments, and said he can always admire a brave woman no matter what her nationality. Isn't it all funny when we think of what she was like at school and how greedy she used to be at the prayer-meetings? There is a missionary couple here — I've mentioned them in my other letters, Mr. and Mrs. Stott. You can't *think* how good they've been to me. I've got lots and lots and lots to tell you when we meet. But I must be quick and finish this letter.

Well: I was married to my darling Roger last Wednesday, and if it wasn't every now and then that I think about poor John I should be the happiest woman alive. Mother, I've *always* loved him since that first morning we met on the steamer and he pointed out the Isle of Wight, and then took such care of me all through the voyage. And he says he fell in love with me the same time. Isn't that *wonderful* when you think of all the great ladies he has seen, many of them I'm sure in love with him. When I asked him why, he just kissed me and said it was my violet eyes and my look of utter helplessness. But I feel it is *too*

sacred to talk or write about. I was always a true wife to poor John. People may think and say what they like. There is a horrid old cat here on the Mainland, who also travelled out with me. I'm sure she says and writes horrid things about me. It's only jealousy. But even now, Mother, I haven't told you almost the most wonderful thing of all! I did just say in my last letter how I'd gone to stay with the wife of the Consul-General. It happened this way. When we first landed here from one of those dreadful Arab sailing-boats that are full of what you *will* call B flats but what I think — and so does Roger — it is much more sensible to call "bugs" straight out — when we landed Roger said, "You'd better go to Mr. Callaway and stay there first till I can find out what it's best to do for you." So there I went, and I was just *miserable*. I didn't like to tell you *how* much at the time for fear of its upsetting you. I really felt almost like committing suicide, only I should never do anything so wicked. But there I lay, inside my mosquito curtain in a room like a Turkish bath, crying, *crying* to myself about poor John and thinking I should never see Roger again, and what Mrs. Baines would say when I came back all alone; when in walked Lady Dewburn, the wife of the Consul-General —"my boss"— as Roger calls him. She would have it that I was to go away with her then and there. Mother, I'd hardly any clothes after that dreadful journey; that was one reason I felt ashamed to go out. Well, she put me in a lovely cool bedroom at the top of her house.— It has a flat roof and I used so to enjoy walking out of my room and looking at the sea and the natives down below and the ships and palms. She had my meals sent up to me and often came up herself to inquire, and for a week she got Indian tailors to cut out and sew clothes for me to wear. When they were ready I had got quite well again, and then she brought me down and introduced

me to her husband, who is the great man of this place. *He* used rather to make fun of me, tease me you know, but he was kind under it all. Mother, if I'd been *their own daughter* they couldn't have treated me kinder. She wouldn't let me thank her, said I was a distressed British subject and it was her duty. And after I'd been staying with them about six weeks and was beginning to say I ought to earn my living or else go home, she said, wouldn't you as an alternative like to marry Roger Brentham? And I said, He'd never ask me and if he did I should only spoil his career. And she said, *Nonsense.* And the next day, when they had both gone out driving, Roger came to the room where I was working with Halima (who, strange to say, has married his cook!) and asked me to be his wife. How could I say anything but "yes"? I know now I should have died of consumption or something if he hadn't. But of course I said —"It can't be till poor John has been dead a year." Then that evening when I told Lady Dewburn, she said, "Nonsense! I can see no reason why it shouldn't be at the end of March. Then if Captain Brentham has to go home you can return with him." So, of course, I gave in.

I'm afraid it'll make lots of people angry, especially Mrs. Baines. How can we break it to her?

There are a *thousand* other things I can tell you, but if I don't finish this letter now I shan't be in time to put it in the Agency mail-bag, which I always think is so much safer than the ordinary post, and I don't have to stamp it.

So in a few more weeks darling mother you will meet again

Your own

LUCY.

P.S. Love to father and the dear girls. *Do* see what you can do with Mrs. Baines. I feel *so* sorry for her, and I should so like to tell her about John.

Things might have been so different if only my little baby had lived, John felt it *dreadfully*.

Private and Confidential.

H.M. Agency and Consulate-General,
Unguja,
April 2.

DEAR BAZZARD,—

I take advantage of a British steamer which is crossing to-day to Medina to send you this hurried note.

Your colleague, Captain Brentham, was married on March 31 to Mrs. John Baines, the widow of the poor fellow who was killed at Hangodi. Brentham will probably be returning to England very shortly on leave of absence (I understood from you you were willing to postpone your leave for a few months). Before he goes I have asked him to co-operate with you in getting affairs at the Medina Consulate settled up satisfactorily, so that you may formally take over from him and be Acting Consul there till there are further developments. I am very grateful to you and Mrs. Bazzard for stepping into the breach caused by these confounded disturbances which have not only occurred in the German hinterland but are now beginning in ours — so we mustn't boast too soon!

Brentham had to leave, as you know, very hurriedly last September, and if the Arabs had succeeded in taking the town matters would have been ever so much worse than they are. He says if there turns out really to be any deficit in the cash due to the embezzlement of the Indian clerk — if he did embezzle — but *what* has become of him? Was he killed? — he is willing to make it good out of his own pocket. (Rather hard on him as he could not help leaving this man in charge; but I may come in like a benevolent arbiter if the affair is serious.) The loss or disappearance of the office

cipher is a serious business — very —. I don't see what good it would be retrieving it from the Germans, as, if they *have* had it at all in their possession, they have probably derived from it all the information they want!

Whilst Brentham is over at Medina I want him to have an interview with the German commandant, Captain Wissmann, as he can convey to him a message from me.

I hope Mrs. Bazzard continues well? She has certainly shown she can stand the climate. But we mustn't try her *too* far.

Sincerely yours . . .
GODFREY DEWBURN.

When this letter reached Spencer Bazzard he took it promptly to his wife, who was seated before her dressing-table rubbing a little of the "hair-restorer" into the very roots of her hair, which had an exasperating way of not starting gold from the skin-level. She said, keeping her eyes fixed on the glass, "Read it aloud." He did so. "Hooray," she exclaimed, with ordered joy so as not to interfere with the delicate operation — they were going out to dine that night with a German functionary —"Hooray! That means he's scuppered. He's going home, you bet, rather off colour. They've made him marry her to placate the missionaries. But he'll never bother *us* again out here. Well, we'll be civil to him in the clearing up."

From Captain Roger Brentham to Lady Silchester.

Mbweni, Unguja,
April 2, 1889.

DEAR SIBYL,—

I don't think you have any realization of what I've been through lately or you'd have written to inquire,

or condole, or encourage. I've had a regular "gaffe" — tell you more about it by and bye. And a wonderful journey in the interior worthy of a Royal Geographical Society's medal — tell you more about *that* too some day — and — don't start — I've got married!

You always predicted I should marry a "missionaryess." Well: I've done so. Yes, you were right, true Sibyl that you are. I've married the dear little girl — for so she seems to me — whom I escorted out to Unguja three years ago and whom I married myself to her young missionary husband, who was going to a station in the interior called Hangodi. There followed a tragic time. I dare say the newspapers will have told you all about it. She and I got locked up, so to speak, in the far interior and I never thought she, at any rate, would get to the coast alive.

Well: I felt after all we'd gone through together there was only one thing — the right thing — to do, being also very much in love with her. Lady Dewburn (you know whom I mean) thought precisely the same; and Lady Dewburn, let me say, is about the *best* woman I know. I shall *never* forget what she did for my poor Lucy. Dewburn performed the civil ceremony for us and gave a small and quiet wedding breakfast after the "small and quiet" wedding at the Cathedral. My old friend Gravening ("the Venble. Archdeacon") was awfully nice about the whole thing . . . fully approved of my marrying Lucy, under all the sad circumstances, and said he'd fix up the religious part. Because you know what women are. They never think they've been properly married unless it's in a Church — or if they do, their mothers don't.

I know I've got some rough places to get over before I can settle down to work and go full steam ahead, but I look to you and other true friends, real pals — to pull me through. The F.O. seems to have a down on me

and a proportion of the Mission World likewise. But when they hear the whole story they will see I was simply dogged with misfortune and did all I could possibly have done. Unfortunately while I was away in the interior everything went to pieces at my Consulate, and two awful bounders — the Bazzards, more about *them* when we meet — are exploiting it to the utmost.

I am going back to the mainland after a week's holiday to get things put right at the Consulate. Hope I shan't take Bazzard by the throat, or lose my temper with his Bayswater wife. I simply *mustn't*. Well: when I have done all that and left the Bazzards properly installed I take the next steamer back with Lucy. Two years, nearly, have I been out here, and six months' leave on full pay is due to me. I am going home nominally to report. Wonder whether they will send me back? In any case I look to you, dear Cousin and friend, to give me a helping hand — not so much about Consular matters — I feel there if common justice is dealt out I can stand on my own — but as regards little Lucy. Her father's status and that of *my* father are not very different, when you come to look at it, except that Josling is probably a much more useful member of the community. But she may want a helping hand when we come home, if we are asked out and about. Of course, with her extraordinary African experience behind her she will be quite as interesting to meet as a Lady Baker, a Miss Gordon Cumming, or Isabella Bird ——

I've written a short note to good old Maud and a still shorter one to the Pater. Rather rough on a man after only two days of honeymoon to have to sit down and compose all these epistles, even though it is in a tropical paradise like Mbweni — but with the thermometer at ninety something in the shade. I am sure Maud will take to Lucy; not so sure about you. You have become so grand. As to the Pater, he'll hardly

pay much attention to us unless we could consent to be buried at Silchester and excavated by him! Maud wrote some time ago to say his neglect of his Church work for excavation of Roman sites was becoming such a scandal that they'd had to engage a curate for Farleigh.

And that the curate hadn't been there two months before he had proposed to her, been refused, and then settled down to a "filial" manner.

How is Silchester? It's getting on for a year since I had a letter from you; but I saw in a recent newspaper he'd been down with influenza but was "making good progress." That always reads ominously.

Look out for me sometime in May. I hope I shall be as welcome as the flowers of that same. I'm bringing you home some leopard skins and an African rattle for Clitheroe. So long!

ROGER.

A week after these letters were put in the Consular mail-bag, Roger had packed up and was waiting for a gun-boat to convey him across to the mainland — where he was to have an important interview with Captain Wissmann, fresh from a great victory over the Arabs. Sir Godfrey, taking leave of him, said: "Looked at the Reuters this morning?"

Roger: "No! What's up?"

Sir Godfrey: "Your friend Lord Silchester is dead."

"Phew!" said Roger, or as near as he could get to that conventional exclamation of surprise and speculation as to what might have been. . . .

CHAPTER XV

IN ENGLAND

CAPTAIN and Mrs. Brentham arrived in London from East Africa at the end of May, 1889. You must picture Brentham with a reserve of savings of about five hundred pounds lying to his credit at Cocks's, and a salary at the rate of seven hundred a year which will go on till some time in October. After much consideration and discussion during the voyage they have taken a furnished flat on the eighth floor of Hankey's Mansions, St. James's Park, as having a better address —" being close to the Government offices and the clubs, don't you know, and of course if you have the lift going night and day it don't matter whether you're on the first or the eighth floor, to say nothing of the view." Lucy had timidly suggested Pardew's Family Hotel in Great Ormond Street as being very cheap for relations of Aunt Ellen, but Roger with that wistful snobbishness of his class decided it would be rather a come-down to hail from the West Central part of London when you were wishing to impress the Foreign Office favourably; so Hankey's it was, with lots of sunlight, superb views over the Park and the barrack ground with its military challenges and cries.

Mr. Molyneux's room at the Foreign Office.

" Ah, Brentham! Thought you'd soon be turning up. Dewburn's been writing to me about you. . . . Have a cigar? There are the matches. Well. Horrid thing to say, when a man's only just arrived, but you've stirred up a reg'lar hornet's nest among the unco' guid. This confounded Nonconformist Con-

science that Stead's invented or created. There's an obvious reference to you in the last *Review of Reviews* and Labby's put a very caustic article in last week's *Truth,* trying to get at the Government's East African policy through you. All this has mightily upset the Old Man ——"

Roger endeavours to give a lucid and not too lengthy account of the whole sequence of events which led up to his marriage at Unguja; expresses the most justly-felt wrath against the mosquitoes of the Press; offers to horsewhip them or have them up before a court of law. . . .

Molyneux: "My *dear* fellow, what *are* you talking about? You'd simply do for yourself and have to quit the career. First place, horsewhipping's out of date — dam' low, in any case — in the second, there's nothing *libellous* in what they've written — only general application, don't you know. If you took any action on it you'd just dot the *i*'s and cross the *t*'s and get laughed at. And as to what they say in Parliament, can't call them into court over *that.* No. Best leave it alone. *Most* unfortunate. Dare say not a *bit* your fault. Still I think you might have been a trifle more prudent, not — so to speak — have run your head into the noose. *Quite* agree with Dewburn you've done the *right* thing in marrying her. . . .

"Well: so much for that. Now how about this missing cipher? Not sure *that* don't upset us a bit more than your carryings-on with missionary ladies. . . ."

Roger: "But I *didn't* carry on — I — I — really *must* protest against these assumptions ——"

Molyneux: "*All* right. Keep your hair on. . . . Don't get into a wax. . . . I'm only talkin' for your own good. . . . But tell us about this cipher."

Roger (still with an angry flush): "What *can I* tell? I arrive at Medina and am told all in a hurry to

re-organize the Consulate there. There was no one but an Indian clerk in charge. I simply take him over. I put my cipher in the safe, but I had to leave the key with the clerk when at very short notice I started for up-country to warn these confounded missionaries. . . . Wish to *God* I'd paid no heed to your instructions" ("I *say,* old chap, draw it mild . . . and mind what you're doin' with that cigar-ash." Roger strides to the fireplace and throws away the cigar into it.) "I wish to *God,*" he continues, "I'd left 'em alone to stand the racket if the Arabs *did* come. However, what I mean to say is, I only set out to do what I was told to do and couldn't foresee how long it would take. I didn't get back to my Consulate till last April. *How* can I tell what happened to the clerk or the cipher or the money? I paid up the deficit. . . . How do I know what those Bazzards were up to? Mrs. Bazzard ——"

Molyneux (his manner has insensibly become stiffer and more ceremonious): "I think we'll leave the Bazzards out of it. At any rate they aren't here to defend themselves. We must refer the whole matter to Dewburn for inquiry. Meantime here you are on leave and I dare say badly wanting a rest. My advice is: go down to the country. . . . Your father lives in the country, doesn't he?" (Roger nods.) "Well, go down and rusticate a bit and take Mrs. Brentham with you. In a week or two the newspapers and the Nonconformist Conscience will be in full cry after something else. As to whether you should go back, we must leave that to the Old Man. He may think a change of scene advisable. Any use asking you to a bachelor dinner? My wife's out of town just now."

Roger (*very* unwisely, scenting in this a reluctance to ask Lucy too): "No, thank you. I think I'll take your advice and go off to the country. Ungrateful

sort of country — I mean the nation — mine is! Here I've made most important discoveries I've had no time to report on, I've . . . I've . . ." (Feelings too much for him. Takes his hat and stick, bows to Molyneux and leaves his room.) In all this he has acted most foolishly. If he'd gone to Molyneux's — to "Good old Spavins's "— as the clerks called him in the room opposite — bachelor dinner, had told a few good stories and hunting adventures, Molyneux, who really had his kindly side like most men, would have forgotten the old grudge about his intrusive appointment, have taken a much more charitable view about the lost cipher and the hasty marriage and have written a memo for Lord Wiltshire's eye which would have suggested a year's employment at home and a fresh start in East Africa. Mrs. Molyneux would have called on Mrs. Brentham at Hankey's and Mrs. Brentham would have been pronounced by Molyneux "a dam' good-lookin' wench — don't wonder she turned his head a bit — there can't have been much to look at in East Africa" — and Brentham's difficulties were over; and the whole fate of East Africa might have been a little different. As it was, he wrote some such memo as this for the information of the Under-Secretary of State: "Saw Brentham to-day — from Zangia Consulate, East Africa. Looks rather fagged. Evidently had a rough time. But very angry when asked to explain the awkward circumstances of his very protracted journey through the interior with the lady who is now his wife. He protested with much heat against the attacks of the Press and the attitude of the Missionary Societies. I dare say he is a maligned man, but I should also say he is what we call in diplomacy 'un mauvais coucheur.' Difficult to get on with, quarrelsome with colleagues. He could throw no light on the loss of his cipher. Did not seem to realize what trouble and expense it has caused. He has six months' leave of absence due.

Suggest when that is coming to an end he be offered some Consular post in Norway or Algeria."

Roger called at 6A, Carlton House Terrace, but was told by the man-servant opening the door that Lady Silchester and the little Lord Silchester were still in the country, at Engledene, and that it was improbable her Ladyship would be in town again until the autumn, being in deep mourning. Roger scribbled on his card (which would be sent on with other cards of calling and polite inquiries):

"So much want to see you. Starting to-morrow for Church Farm, Aldermaston.— ROGER."

Roger delivered his blushing wife, rather overdressed (for he had insisted on a fashionable outfit), to her parents at Aldermaston; he shook hands heartily with his father-in-law to whom he took an immediate liking, kissed his mother-in-law (to her confusion) and his sisters-in-law, and then let his father-in-law drive him over to the nearest station from which he could get a train to Basingstoke (for Farleigh), promising to return in four days after he had seen his father, sister, and brothers, one of them at Portsmouth. When he did get back to Church Farm, Lucy was in bed, ill, and his father and mother-in-law were looking grave and preoccupied. They were also — as country people are — a little tiresomely reticent. *What had happened? This,* as he afterwards pieced it together.

When Mrs. Baines had received Ann Anderson's letter — written, as you will remember, about November 30, but not posted from Unguja till early in January — she had a knock-down blow. It is true the Mission on the receipt of a telegram from Callaway had warned her to expect serious news from Hangodi, but she had not paid much attention, so convinced was she that God must avert all harm from a son of hers. But the letter — from Ann, too, whom she would have welcomed as a daughter-in-law — was convincing, and for

the first few hours after she had read it twice through, she locked herself into their joint bedroom to Mr. Baines's great discomfiture — he might wash and sleep where he liked. She had shouted at him through the keyhole, in a hoarse, strangled voice he hardly recognized as hers, that his son John was dead, killed by the "A-rabs," no doubt with that slut of a Lucy's full approval; and left to digest this dreadful news as best he might. Eliza, touched to great pity and a sympathetic sobbing over the fate of Master John, made him up a sort of a shakedown bedroom arrangement in the "libery," where he did his accounts. . . .

Mrs. Baines did not emerge from her fastness for a day and a half. When she did come out she was composed, but with such an awful look in her eyes that no one dared offer sympathy or proffer advice. She gave her orders in as few words as possible. She set to work to confection the deepest mourning and pulled the blinds down, and down they had to remain a full week. During that week by the aid of candle-light she wrote a good many letters — for her. Eliza, who had to post them, for Mrs. Baines shrank from encountering friends or acquaintances till the week was up, noticed that some of them bore quite grand addresses: the member for Reading, the Marquis of Wiltshire, the Editor of the *Review of Reviews*. . . .

How did Mrs. Baines know so soon that Lucy and Roger had returned to England and come down to see the Joslings at Church Farm? Why, because the miller of Aldermaston saw the Brenthams arrive at Aldermaston station and witnessed the greeting of Farmer Josling — such a fine upstanding man — and his son-in-law — just such another, only rather sallow-like and thin; and the miller told old Mrs. Bunsby of the general shop at Theale; and Mrs. Bunsby, wanting badly a supply of ginger beer, for the weather was getting warm and Oxford undergraduates sometimes

pushed their walking tours as far as the Kennet Valley — Mrs. Bunsby walked over to *John Baines & Co.* that very afternoon to give an order for four dozen and mentioned the fact of "pore Master John's widow" having come back to her home "with a noo 'usband."

The assistant who registered the order for delivery in their next round, after Mrs. Bunsby left slipped into Mr. Baines's "libery," and half-whispered the news of Lucy's return. When, soon afterwards, Mrs. Baines came into the dining-room to preside over the tea table, he — (he looked very aged — my astral body floating over the scene felt a twinge of pity for him; in his own dull way he had been fond and proud of his only son and worked to provide him with a competency — some day) — he, with some preparatory clearing of the throat, said: "Er . . . Hrhm. . . . Er . . . Lucy's back, I hear. . . ."

"Indeed?" replied his wife swiftly. "Where? Bridewell? That's where she *ought* to be. . . ."

"I dare say, my dear, but she's at Church Farm, her parents', you know. . . . P'raps she could tell you something about John? . . ."

"P'raps she could. But I won't have her name mentioned in *this* house. *Do you understand?*"

Mr. Baines did, and took this intimation as final.

The next day was Sunday. Mrs. Baines spent much of the day (as she had decided she could not go to chapel) communing in prayer with her Maker in the bedroom fastness. Some of the prayers heard by the frightened Eliza through the keyhole sounded more like objurgations, and the Scripture readings were the minatory passage directed by the Minor Prophets against harlots and light women.

After two days of Aldermaston Lucy had quite recovered her spirits — she had felt rather depressed at Hankey's Mansions and not at all lightened at heart by her week of shopping under Aunt Pardew's furtive

guidance and rather checked congratulations. On the Monday morning she was standing with her parents and Clara in front of the beautiful old farm house, inhaling the scents of May, revelling with the eye over the landscape beauty she had so often recalled to herself in Africa. Farmer Josling had repeatedly given expression to the pleasure he had derived from the looks, manner, and hand-grip of his son-in-law, and Mrs. Josling still blushed and laughed at the remembrance of his having kissed her cheek. They could not help the gratification of feeling that their daughter's second marriage was into a social stratum worthy of her looks, her superior education and their hopes for her. . . .

Clara, walking away to glance at the bee-hives, called back to the group, "Here's Mrs. Baines coming up from the road."

Instinctively the parents withdrew into the porch of the house, leaving their daughter to meet Mrs. Baines for the first few minutes alone, with no other listeners to the sad story she had to tell. Lucy, like the bird fascinated by the snake, remained where she was, her fingers playing with a pansy she had just picked. Mrs. Baines, all in black, with black plumes to a large bonnet and black gloves, walked slowly and consideringly up to the spell-bound Lucy. When she was close to her she said: "*What . . . have . . . you done . . . with . . . my . . . son?* . . ."

"Oh! I . . . I . . . haven't you heard?" stammered Lucy.

"I *have* heard . . . and I've guessed much *more* than I've heard. . . . *You . . . you harlot* — you *adulteress* — *you* — *you strumpet!*" roared Mrs. Baines, who had been cooking her vengeance and rehearsing this scene with a dictionary, during the last twenty-four hours. And forthwith before Lucy could reply or any one intervene she had dealt her two terrific

boxes on the ears, first on one side and then on the other.

Lucy fell on to the pansy bed, temporarily stunned. Mr. Josling, scarcely able at first to believe ears and eyes, rushed out with a roar like a bull, picked up Mrs. Baines round her iron stays, as though she weighed no more than a wisp, ran round to the other side of the house where there was a great horse trough full of water, and soused in this the head and huge plumed bonnet of the angry woman. And again, giving her time to catch her breath, he plunged her head and bonnet beneath the water. Then, standing her on her feet, he said, "*There! that'll* cool your hot blood. That is some return for your half-killing my daughter — you *blasted she-tiger, you* . . . Be *off!* Or I'll set the dogs on you. . . . I'll . . ."

"Father, *dear,*" said Clara, crying for pity and rage over the hapless Lucy, yet careful of appearances: "Father *dear, don't* shout so! For goodness' sake, let the old witch go, and don't attract everybody's attention. What ever *will* the neighbours think! Here!" she said, thrusting on Mrs. Baines the umbrella she had brought and dropped on the garden path at the moment of the assault, "be off with you, you wicked old woman. It's a mercy father ain't killed you, he's that strong. And if you've done any real harm to my sister, we'll soon let you know and have you up before the courts, you *wicked old snivelling psalm-singin' Methody!*"

Mrs. Baines said nothing to this counter-attack. She drained the water from her plumes with her fingers, put her flopping bonnet as straight as was possible, pressed the water from her shoulders, and made some attempt to wipe her face with a handkerchief; and then, summoning all her strength and resolution (for in reality she was much shaken and near collapse), she walked firmly past them, uttering never a word,

walked slowly down the garden path, turned to the right and contrived not to halt on her way back to the station till she was well out of their sight. They were a little over-awed by her dignity.

It was decided — and Lucy when she could speak implored them to adopt this negative course — not to write to Roger, and as far as possible not to talk of this painful scene to any neighbour. But to keep it from country gossip was an impossibility. This, that, or the other farm servant had seen it, from the rafters of a barn in repair, from the stables, from the dairy window; and so the treatment old Mrs. Baines had served out to her former daughter-in-law became noised abroad, penetrated from the kitchen and still-room of Engledene House to its mistress's dressing-room. A vague rumour of it even reached the African Department of the Foreign Office and Molyneux publicly shrugged his shoulders in Sir Mulberry Hawk's room. The Carnarvons at Highclere heard a perversion of it — rather a humorous one — from one of their farmer tenants, and reconsidered their idea of asking Brentham and Mrs. Brentham over to a week-end party to relate some of their extraordinary experiences. The Vicar of Farleigh Wallop realized that something of the kind had occurred to interrupt his musings on the arrangements of the streets in Calleva Atrebatum, and when he drove over with Maud to make the acquaintance of his daughter-in-law — now convalescent and thankful to find the drum of the worst smacked ear had not been split — he was merely coldly polite and expressed very little interest in missionary questions. Indeed he took no interest in Christian Missions after 700 A.D. Up to that time he reckoned — more or less — they had been spreading the ideas of Imperial Rome, of Roman civilization.

Roger, however, though he commented little on the

episode of the assault, and felt in every way the least said, soonest mended, borrowed his father-in-law's riding-horse and rode early one morning over to Tilehurst. He entered the factory, of design, just as Mr. Baines was about to take his seat in the office and run his eyes over the day's orders. "Oh, don't be alarmed!" he said to Mr. Baines, who was instinctively about to withdraw, guessing his visitor's identity. "I'm not a violent heathen like your wife. Sit down and let us talk this over like sensible men."

He then put the matter very plainly before Mr. Baines.

Mrs. Baines, summoned by half-fearful, half-exultant Eliza, had "locked herself in her bedroom, she 'ave an' ast me to go for the police!"

"Then you, too," said Roger to the startled Eliza, "remain and hear what I have to say. Since your termagant of a mistress refuses to come, you shall repeat my words to her. You are, from what my wife tells me, an old and trusted servant of the family" (Eliza bridled and pleated the hem of her apron). "When she returns to sanity, you may get a chance of saying a word to your mistress in season, even if her husband has not the courage to do so. Tell her then, if she ever annoys or slanders or upsets my wife in any way I will leave no stone unturned to punish her. And if she appears at Church Farm or anywhere else again with the intention of assaulting my wife I will knock her on the head like the mad dog she is. Now you can leave us. But I trust also to you as an honourable woman and one who was sincerely fond of poor John Baines, who ought never to be connected with these hateful sayings and doings, not to chatter about this business outside this house."

And Eliza did not. She was much impressed by Brentham's appeal. The interview with John's father even ended in a kind of reconciliation. He heard

from Brentham for the first time the whole story, so far as it was known, of the circumstances which led up to the attack on the station, John's death, and Lucy's journey to the coast; of how her baby had died and how ill she had been; of the Stotts, and of Ann Jamblin's obstinacy. Roger purposely prolonged the interview. It was doing the miserable father good, and was keeping Mrs. Baines a prisoner in her bedroom just when she wanted to be busy at house-work.

Maud on her return from visiting the Joslings tightened her lips and "went for" her father as he had never been truth-told before; so Mrs. Baines, if she did harm to Lucy's good fame and gave her nervous system a nasty shock, also provoked good in other directions. A disturbance of the kind seldom fails to clear the air and create a fresher atmosphere. Maud reproached her father bitterly with his incivility to his eldest son's wife; with his general indifference to the well-being of his children, his selfish absorption in his archæological work, his unfairness to them in lavishing on it funds which should have been their patrimony. She even issued a sort of ultimatum: the subsidies to the Silchester Excavation fund must cease; the curate at Farleigh must be given his congé and the Vicar — still able-bodied — carry out his own Church duties: *or* she would go away and earn her own living as a secretary or something or other. And she was at once, and on his authority, to ask Lucy to stay — with Roger, of course — for at least a month. He gave in. Maud had deeper plans hidden under this surface wrath. Roger was in difficulties with the Foreign Office, she guessed. He had resigned from the Indian Army. He might at any time have to forge a new career for himself and would want a little capital to start with. She reckoned that her father having originally been a well-to-do man and her mother having come to him with a substantial dowry, there ought to

be a least twelve thousand pounds to be divided between the four of them. If that left her father almost entirely dependent on his income — about five hundred a year — from the twin benefices of Farleigh and Cliddesden, that would serve him right. He had no business to squander his children's money — as it really was — on a work of excavation which the County or the Nation should finance.

A little repentant and more than a little rheumatic — (besides, Roman Silchester was turning out so distressingly Christian and so little Pompeian and Pagan) — he agreed at any rate to look into the matter. The letter was sent to Lucy, and she came, now quite restored to health. She found in Maud the selfless friend and good adviser she had long needed. All she begged and prayed of Roger was that he might leave her at Farleigh for a time and not frighten her and upset her nerves by requiring of her the going out into smart Society, where she was ever on the twitter for fear of being questioned as to her birth and bringing-up and the circumstances of her life in Africa.

Roger rather ruefully consented. Maud would gradually cure her of her nerves and her rusticity. Meantime he would now tackle Sibyl. Sibyl had taken no notice of his card and call; but about three weeks afterwards had written to Maud, picturing herself as having now emerged from a swoon of grief and being ready to see Roger for a *few* minutes if he would *promise* to move gently and speak in a level voice, as *the least thing* upset her. Pressed to be more definite, she consented to see him — and him only — at Engledene on a certain Wednesday afternoon at three o'clock.

He found her in a little boudoir, which was draped with pleated lavender-mauve cashmere and shaded to a dim light. She was dressed in black, not having as yet the hardihood to discard widows' weeds, still less

some diaphanous, filmy *coiffe,* some ghost of a widow's cap. Queen Victoria was still a great power in Society and kept Peeresses in order. If you were too daring you might be banned at Court and *then* where would your social and political influence be?

"Wheel up, or better still *lift* up — I can't bear the *slightest* jar, just now — that small armchair, Roger — the purple velvet one — and put it near enough for me to hear and speak without effort; but not *too* near, because I notice you have a very powerful aura. I've only just learnt about auras, and I realize now *what* a difference they make! . . ."

"All right," said Roger, obeying these instructions, "but what's an aura? Is it the smell of my Harris tweeds, or do you doubt my having had a bath this morning?"

"Don't be so perfectly horrid . . . and coarse. . . . You never *used* to be coarse, whatever you were.— I suppose it comes from marrying a farmer's daughter; but for the matter of that, what am *I?* My poor dear dad is trying hard to be a farmer after spending his best years in the Army. I didn't mean anything much about your 'aura,' except, I suppose, that as I'm only recently widowed all my relations with men-visitors should be a little frigid. But I'm simply talking nonsense to gain time, to remember what I wanted to say to you." (A pause.) . . . "Roger! Your *dreadful* letter from that Gouging place, coming just on top of poor Francis's death, *knocked me over.* The doctors put it all down to Francis, of course . . . I don't deny that his death *did* upset me. . . . But I'd been expecting *that* any time within the last six months. . . . The doctors told me *definitely* last winter his heart was very unsound and that he must not over-exert himself in any way or be contraried or argued with. . . . *That* was why I gave up the orange-velvet curtains and general redecoration of the dining-room at 6A, Carlton House

Terrace — which is dingy beyond belief. I shall do it now. . . . It's too early for tea . . . won't you smoke?" (Roger: "Thank you.") "Well, there's everything on that little table. . . . No. Not those ones; they've got the wee-est flavour of opium. . . . Obliged to do *something* for my nerves. . . . Well, now, about your Gouging letter. . . . I mean about your marriage. . . . My *dear* Roger! *What* a *gaffe!* I mean, how *could* you?"

"Could I what?"

"*Ruin* your hopes and mine?"

"Well, I *did* hope to marry Lucy . . . for at least six months before the knot was tied. . . . Ever since her husband's death. So *my* hopes were fulfilled. And as to you, I never prevented you from marrying Lord S. So where the ruin comes in, I can't see."

"Oh," wailed Sibyl, "*why* beat about the bush? You must have known that I always hoped if anything happened to poor Francis — and anything *might* well have done so — after all, you or I might be in a railway accident or break our necks out hunting. In such case you *must* have known I *counted* on you . . . I mean, on our being happy *at last*. . . . Don't interrupt! . . . And just think! Francis loved me awfully. I really *was perfectly sweet* to him and did my duty to him *in every way*. His gratitude for that boy . . . for a direct heir! . . . Well, after Clithy was born he made his will! . . . Don't be silly . . . and don't joke about things I regard almost as sacred. . . . I mean *Francis* re-made his will; and left me sole guardian of the boy and sole trustee, sole *everything;* and mistress for my life of Engledene, and of 6A, till Clithy came of age . . . and a jointure of £10,000 a year to keep them up. Clithy has also the Silchester house which is let and which I intend to *keep* let till he comes of age, the moors in Scotland *and* the shooting lodge. Of course he has the reversionary rights of *everything* after my

death. And equally of course he has fifteen thousand a year, which I control till he is twenty-one or until he marries. . . .

"Just *think* what I could have done for you, out of all this — if you'd *waited!* If *only* you'd waited! . . ." (buries her face in the mauve silk cushions and cries a little or pretends to). (Roger fidgets on his chair. An exquisite little purple Sèvres clock on the white mantelpiece ticks . . . ticks . . . ticks.)

Roger: "Look here, Sibyl. You're altogether on the wrong tack, believe me. You might have married me in '86. I was quite ready then and fancied myself in love with you. But if you had we mightn't have got on. My seven hundred a year would have been nowhere to give you surroundings like this. . . ." (And he looks round the boudoir "done" in white, lavender, mauve and purple, with its exquisite bits of furniture, its velvet-covered armchair and Charles II daybed, and pillow covers of mauve silk; and looked also at the sinuous figure of the woman coiled on the daybed in her filmy black dress, with her face half buried in the silk cushions, and one disconsolate arm lying listlessly along her side, and at the magnificent rings of emeralds and diamonds on the pink fingers.) "You were *quite* right: you could *never* have stood the strain of Africa. I'll tell you by and bye some of the things Lucy and I went through." (At this hint of comradeship with Lucy, the little black velvet shoes gave angry thumps on the frame of the day-bed.) "I know," continues Roger, "you used to throw out mysterious hints after you were married that I might wait till some far-off date when you were free; I mean after Lord Silchester was dead. But what decent man would have taken you at your word? Why, Silchester night well be alive now. He did not die of old age. . . ."

Sibyl (in a muffled voice): "N-no; he . . . he

. . . didn't. He — overrated his strength. He — he — oh, *how* can I tell you? He was so anxious to play a great part in public affairs . . . but he had lost all his energy. . . ." (Sitting up with flushed cheeks — damnably good-looking, Roger feels.) "*Well!* What can I do for you? You've failed *me*. But I suppose you've come here to ask me to help you in some way. Men don't generally waste their time on afternoon calls without a motive. What is it? I've got no influence anywhere since Francis died" (a sob). "So it's no good asking *me* to write to Lord Wiltshire or to Spavins. I hear you are out of favour at the F.O. It's not *my* fault, is it? It's all due to your gallivanting after missionaries' wives. . . ." (Roger looks sullen.) . . . "Heigh ho! I expect with all this crying and tousling among cushions, to hide I *was* crying from your cynical eyes, I'd better go into my room and bathe my face before the butler brings in the tea. . . . *There!* you can pull up two of the blinds — when I am gone — my eyes are so red — and you can look at some of my new books till I come in to make the tea. You mustn't *dream* of going before we've had tea and finished our talk."

"I suppose," said Sibyl a quarter of an hour later when they were discussing tea and tea-cake and pâté-de-foie sandwiches and assorted cakelets, "what you really came to ask was would I present this Lucy-pucy of yours at Court. But, my *dear*, I shall be in mourning for a year, and the Queen ——"

"*Lord* no! Such a thing never entered my head. It would scare Lucy into fits. I hope before next season comes round I shall be back in Africa — or somewhere. So far as I connected Lucy with this visit I might have intended to ask you to let me bring her here one day, and for you to be kind to her . . . not

frighten her, as you very well could do, pretending all the time to be her best friend. . . ."

Sibyl: "Well: I'll tell you what you shall do. You must remember I'm in mourning, of course. . . . We always have to think of what the servants will say. . . . And — ah! Did I tell you? Aunt Christabel is here. I sent her out the longest drive I could think of, so that we might have our afternoon alone; still, she's staying here till I emerge from the deepest of my mourning. . . . By the bye she's *horrified* at your marriage, just as she used to be horrified at the idea of your marrying *me*. . . . Well, bring your Lucy over one day at the end of July and I'll just have a look at her. And then, in the autumn — say October — you and she, and of course if you like to have them, Maurice and Geoffrey too, could come here for the shooting. *Of course* I shan't have a regular party; but somebody must come and shoot the pheasants. The Queen couldn't object to that. I've asked a man — I did before Francis's death — to come. You might like to meet him: a Sir Willowby Patterne. . . . Dare say you've heard of him?"

Roger: "I've heard no *good* of him. . . ."

"Oh, what tittle-tattlers and scandal-mongers you men are! I think he's *so* amusing, and every one says he's a splendid shot. . . . However, we will make up just a *tiny* party and you and Lucy shall entertain for me. I shall purposely be very little seen and shall give out my cousins have come over to help me with my guests. . . . And, *Roger!* If I am to help you you must help *me*. The doctor says I positively *must* take up my riding again unless I am to drift into being an invalid. Couldn't you — sometimes — whilst you're down in this part of the world — come over and ride with me? I can 'mount' you. You could ride poor Francis's cob . . . not showy but very steady."

"I will, when I come back from town," said Roger, and took his departure, not at all dissatisfied with his afternoon.

Two days afterwards he thought it might be prudent to see how things were going at the Foreign Office. So he went up to town, changed into town togs at Hankey's (where their flat was becoming a white elephant, owing to Lucy's dislike to London, so he arranged to give it up), and betook himself to Downing Street, and asked to see Mr. Bennet Molyneux. "Mr. Bennet Molyneux," he was presently told, "is very sorry, sir, but he is much engaged this morning; would you go into the Department and see one of the young gentlemen there?"

The Department was a large, long room with a cubby-hole at its further end for the accommodation of the senior clerk, a sort of school prefect who had to keep order among the high-spirited juniors and therefore required to work a little apart from them. When Brentham entered the main room, announced by the office messenger, he recognized two friends of yore and several new, ingenuous faces. There also emerged from the cubby hole a man whom he had known as a junior three years previously: an agreeable gentleman of agricultural and sporting tastes, who, because of his occasional remonstrances and enforcement of discipline, was known as "Snarley Yow or the Dog Fiend." Then there were "Rosie" Walrond and Ted Parsons. (The others do not matter in this narrative: they merely served as chorus and acclaimers of the witticisms of the elder boys. They were all nice to look at, all well-mannered and all well-dressed.) "Rosie" Walrond was a young man — older than he looked — with wavy flaxen hair and mocking grey eyes, and an extremely cynical manner overlying an exceedingly kind heart.

Walrond: "Hullo! Here's *Brentham,* the rescuer

of beleaguered Gospellers. We've got a grudge against you. You came here months ago and were closeted with Spavins and never gave us a look-in. And we were dying to hear all about the elopement and its sequel. We were prepared to subscribe to a wedding present for a teller of good stories. . . ."

Then he added: "D'you admire my grotto?"

Brentham, after the necessary greetings and introductions, strode up to "Rosie's" desk. Its ledges and escarpments were piled with rock specimens on which tattered, brown, and half-decipherable labels had been pasted.

"*My mineral specimens* . . . from" (he checked himself) . . . "from East Africa! Then you *never* sent them on?"

"My *dear* chap! Where was I to send them to? The Consular Mail bags — two of them — arrived here all right, addressed to me, but nary a letter with them or any directions. Also two skulls which, as you see, decorate our mantelpiece, and which I am proposing to have mounted in silver at Snarley's expense for our Departmental Dinner. Meantime, I have arranged my desk as a grotto, in spite of the office cleaner's objections. . . ."

Brentham: "I suppose the letter of directions went astray. I asked you to send the rocks to the School of Mines and the skulls to the Natural History Museum. However, I'll take them all away presently in a cab."

"But *not* the skulls, I beg, just as we were being initiated into Devil worship by Snarley, who has learnt the Black Mass. . . ."

"Yes, the skulls, too. They're most important. . . ."

"But so are *we*," said Parsons.

Then followed half an hour of chaff, out of which Roger gleaned no grain of information as to his own probable fate and was too diffident to ask outright if any decision as to his return had been arrived at. He

accepted an invitation to dine with the Department at the Cheshire Cheese and meet Arthur Broadmead; then drove to the School of Mines in Jermyn Street, handed in his rocks and asked the Curator for a report on them, at his leisure. After that, Professor Flower and the skulls; which were those of two men of that Hamitic race colonizing the Happy Valley. He had found them lying about on the outskirts of a village and had received the careless permission of the villagers to take them away. They might serve to determine the relationships of this incongruous type.

CHAPTER XVI

SIBYL AS SIREN

IN August, 1889, Lucy conveyed to Roger her belief that she was going to have a child.

"But that is no reason you should not come down with me to Sibyl's place in Scotland. You can't be going to have a baby till — till well on in the winter, and meantime a stay in the Highlands will brace you up. Of course as Sibyl is in mourning she can only have a *very* small house party — just two or three men like myself to shoot the grouse, rabbits and stags. I don't suppose there will be any women there except her aunt and you." Lucy acquiesced unwillingly.

She was living once more with her parents, while Roger's plans were so unsettled. The rooms at Hankey's had been given up, and on his frequent journeys to London — mainly on Sibyl's business — he slept at Aunt Pardew's Hotel in Great Ormond Street, where they made him very comfortable. He had taken Lucy over to Engledene twice in July — once he had left her there a whole afternoon, *tête-à-tête* with the still languid young widow. On that occasion he had purposely ridden over to Tilehurst to see Mr. Baines with more news — sent on by Callaway from Unguja — about Ann Anderson and the restoration of Hangodi station, and what the Mission proposed to do in regard to a memorial grave-stone. It tickled his sense of humour that he should improve his acquaintance with John's father and thus allay any local feeling against Lucy: his visits there not only cheered the Aerated Waters' manufacturer, but they enraged Mrs. Baines.

She was obliged all the time to keep locked up in her bedroom, and this caused Eliza to get out of hand.

But so far, the hope of a friendship growing up between his wife and his one-time sweetheart had little encouragement from either. Sibyl, not wishing to fall out with Roger, declared she *tried* to like Lucy. Yet when other people were present she somehow brought out her rusticity and simplicity, or she adopted towards her a patronizing manner which was evident even to the not very acute senses of Roger's wife.

The visit to Glen Sporran Lodge did not improve their relations. Lucy in matters of dress was by no means without taste or discernment, but she was quite ignorant of the modernest modes. She had no idea that a stay in the Highlands — even in 1889 — involved a special wardrobe: short, kilted skirts and high-buttoned leggings, boots, or spats for the day's adventures — going to meet the guns, tramping over the moors, picnics when the wet weather permitted, and all the shifts for facing a good deal of rain without looking forlorn or ridiculous. Trailing skirts and wet weather were irreconcilable; so were yachting and a silk dress. Perpetual sitting indoors in a town dress, over a turf fire, and reading novels provoked sarcasms not only from Sibyl but from the tart tongue of Aunt Christabel; who wasn't at all inclined to spare Lucy.

What had that good-looking Roger with *such* a career before him had in his mind that he should throw himself away on this village schoolmistress? She did not care, either, for Sibyl's new infatuation for Roger; would have liked to keep them well apart. The distant cousinship was not through her or her sister, Mrs. Grayburn, but through Roger's mother and Colonel Grayburn. Sibyl, when her year of mourning was up, had much better marry again into the peerage; and if she wanted a smart man as Agent — for land-agents of the middle-class-bailiff type were " passés de mode "

on all *big* estates . . . well, there was Willowby, Willowby Patterne (a nephew-in-law of Aunt Christabel), who really might very well do for the post. Willowby had been very wild, had run through much of his own money and his unsuitable wife's — they were never asked out together. But he was a first-class shot, had been to Canada with the Duke of Ulster, knew a lot about blood-stock, had tried farming and ranching and would be quite all there helping Sibyl entertain her house parties and giving an eye to the manly education of James — Aunt Christabel did not countenance Sibyl's silly freak of imposing the name of "Clitheroe" on the little Lord Silchester.

Lucy had the greatest regard for economy and always wanted to save Roger from any unnecessary expenditure. She remembered that she had come to him without a dowry and that his future financially was very uncertain. So that she had not taken him at his word, "Spend what you like," at the Sloane Street shops when they were last up in town together. She had only brought two evening dresses with her to Glen Sporran, and one of them a plain black silk. After they had become familiar to the eye, Sibyl had offered to lend some of *her* gowns, but had done it in such a way that Lucy's pride was touched and she declined, with an unwonted sparkle in her eye and a turning of the rabbit on the stoat. Sibyl then, half amusedly, dropped this method of annoyance and openly praised Mrs. Brentham for her simplicity of life and regard for economy.

All this was rather amusing to the speculative and speculating Sir Willowby Patterne who arrived at Glen Sporran a fortnight later than Roger and Lucy. He must then have been about thirty. As you surmise from his name, he was descended from a famous mid-nineteenth century baronet. His grandfather (in diplomacy) married a Russian lady of the Court after

the Napoleonic wars when Russians were in the fashion. But I think it wholly unfair to attribute to this alliance the curious vein of cruelty which ran through his descendants and which in Willowby's father was slaked by the contemporary British field sports. This father died from the envenomed bite of an impaled badger, and in Willowby's case there was a long minority; so that he started at twenty-one — already a subaltern in the Guards — with quite a respectable fortune to "blue." He had been a vicious, tipsy boy at Eton and did not improve as he grew older. One thing that developed with him into a mania was the love of killing. He had seen a little service in the Sudan, but disgusted his brother officers by his exultation over the more gory episodes in skirmishes (he generally kept out of battles), and by his interest in executions and floggings. Owing to family influence he was for a very brief time in the suite of a travelling Royalty; but an episode in the garden of a Lisbon hotel, when he with a friend was seen worrying a cat to death with two bull-terriers — and laughing frenziedly the while — put an end to that appointment. He had had some success on the turf and in steeplechase riding, and over shooting pigeons at Monte Carlo; had betrayed quite a number of trusting women — including his wife; but nevertheless was rather popular still in Society, especially the society of rich, idle women, seeking after sensation without scandal. What there was about him, save his faultless tailoring and evil reputation to attract women, a man like Brentham could not understand. His face was thin and he had those deep ugly lines around the mouth, that tightness of skin over the temples and jaw, the thin lips and thin hair, aquiline nose, and thin capable hands that go with cruelty and pitilessness. But that women *did* run after him, there was no denying; though at this time his wife was shudderingly seeking grounds for divorce, or at any rate

separation, which would satisfy a male judge and jury.

Roger enjoyed the shooting with rifle and shot-gun, and his dislike of Willowby was a little tempered by the latter's unwilling admiration of his marksmanship. I forget whether in August–September you fish for salmon in Scotland with a rod and line, but if so you may be sure Captain Brentham, to whom field sports of all kinds came as second nature, displayed no less prowess in that direction. Moreover Willowby tried to be civil to his deputy host because he was very much drawn to big-game shooting in East Africa and thought Roger could put him up to the right place, right time of year, and right strings to pull.

But when the day's sport was done and they had bathed and changed and laid themselves out for a jolly evening, Roger began to be nervous and sensitive about Lucy: sometimes to wish she would not open her mouth; at others to yearn for her to show *some* brilliance in conversation. Her little naïvetés of speech and turns of phrase which seemed so amusing and even endearing in Africa, or to an admiring, bucolic audience at Aldermaston, or an indulgent sister-in-law at Farleigh Vicarage, here withered into imbecilities under the mocking glance or the bored incomprehension of Sibyl, and the cool, eyeglass stare of Willowby Patterne. Sibyl, also, was afflicted with deafness when Lucy ventured her inquiries at breakfast as to health or the state of the weather.

Out of fear of Queen Victoria, Sibyl thought to make friends at Court and attest at the same time the "smallness" and "quietness" of her house party by inviting for a week a lady of the Royal Household who was off duty and at all times not unwilling to eat well and sleep softly at some one else's expense. But she, also, was disconcerting (though no doubt a pyramid of flawless chastity). She wore a single eyeglass through which everything and everybody was scanned.

At first she was disposed to be very much interested in Roger, until she gathered he might not be returning to Africa. She had friends who were casting in their lots with Cecil Rhodes's ventures. To her mental vision, Africa was about the size of an English county. A man in East Africa ought at any moment to run up against that perfectly delightful creature, Rhodes, . . . "the dear Queen is getting *so* interested in him" . . . "was there gold by the bye where Captain Brentham had been employed?" But when she learnt that Sibyl's cousin was probably not resuming his post there and that this very dull, oddly dressed woman was not Sibyl's secretary but Roger's wife, a former missionary in East Africa, she quietly gave them both up as much too much outside her own track through life ever to be of use or interest again.

Another guest for a brief time was the Rev. Stacy Bream. Mr. Bream even in those distant days was not — and did not behave like — the conventional clergyman. He was the incumbent of some Chapel Royal or Chaplaincy somewhere, wholly in the Royal gift and generally bestowed on some one who had been for a brief period a bear-leader or College tutor to a princeling going through a make-believe course of study at Oxford or Cambridge. Mr. Bream, in order to take a line of his own, plunged boldly into the world, even the half-world, for his congregation and his confidants. He confessed and absolved the leading ladies of the stage when they reached that period of ripe middle age in which husbands began to be unfaithful and lovers shy and the lady herself felt just the slightest dread of a hereafter. He came forward to marry, when remarriage was legal but not savoury — sooner than that the poor dears should live in sin. He dealt — I dare say very kindly and considerately — with scabrous cases of moral downfall that no one else would touch. He was a well-known first-nighter and his evening

dress so nearly unclerical that you might have been pardoned for not spotting him at once, in the crush room, for a parson, and he would have been the first to pardon you. He always went where Society did in order to be able at once to render first aid where morals had met with an accident. He left town consequently in time for the grouse, occasionally handled a gun — quite skilfully — and was very fond of games of chance in the evening if the stakes were not too high.

Bridge had not then reached Great Britain. Where they would have played Bridge ten years ago they played Baccarat, or Unlimited Loo, or Nap, or Poker. Lucy only knew "Pope Joan" and had a horror of losing money over cards and no capacity for mastering any card game, not even Snip Snap Snorum. The Rev. Stacy Bream — who as much as any cleric might, stood in lieu of a Spiritual director to Lady Silchester — called Lucy once or twice "My dear che-ild" and then found her so uninteresting and inexplicable that he ceased to study her any more.

So Lucy at last, in dread of snubs if she entered the battledore and shuttlecock conversation or of revealing her utter ignorance of the ways of smart society, fell silent at meal-times and after meals. When the others played cards or roulette on a miniature green table, she would read a book in a corner or steal away up to bed before the maids had done her room for the night. And gradually she developed the red, moist nose that comes to a woman who cries in secret, and there were wrought other changes in good looks and figure attendant on her condition. And then one day, early in September, Roger, returning to his dressing-room for a cigarette-case and to ascertain if Lucy was ready to start on an excursion, found her on her bedroom sofa in a crisis of weeping. Sibyl had summed up her makeshift costume — for a day's yachting — in one short phrase. . . . This on top of having completely

overlooked her existence at yesterday's picnic lunch, and left her cupless and tealess at the late tea which followed their return. "R — Ro — ger, oh dear Roger, *let* me go home! I'm only in *every one's* way here. I never felt so stupid in my life before. *I can't* think what's the matter with me — it's the feeling they all *despise me* — and — and — pity you for having made a fool of yourself. Let me go home to mother — and Maud! . . ."

Roger consented at once. He felt full of remorse and pity, promised soon to join her in the south, escorted her as far as Carlisle, and arranged that kind Maud should meet her at Euston and take her home to Aldermaston. The others were too utterly uninterested in her to listen much to his explanation with its discreet allusion. She was a bore and a wet blanket out of the way, and they could now settle down to enjoy themselves. Sibyl, to keep up the fiction of being in mourning, wore black and absented herself from most of the pleasure outings; going about instead alone with Roger, to show him the ins and outs of the estate and enable him to formulate plans for its profitable development.

Early in October, Captain Brentham saw young Lord Tarrington (heir to the Earldom of Pitchingham) and précis-writer to Lord Wiltshire). He was told that Lord W. had given careful attention to his case. His Lordship thoroughly appreciated his painstaking work for a year or more as Acting Consul-General, but thought that under the circumstances it was better he should not return to the scene of his former labours on the mainland. H. L., however, though Captain Brentham had scarcely been more than an officer selected for special service in Africa, would be pleased to consider him favourably for the consular posts of Bergen or of Baranquilla.

"I suppose you know where Bergen is?" added Lord Tarrington. "A little bit near the North Pole — or is it North Cape? I always mix the two. But it's in *Norway, very* bracing climate, *awfully* good sea-fishing, and £350 a year. Or if you prefer heat, there's Baranquilla, northern South America, ***not*** a good climate, but the last man stood it for two years before he succumbed to yellow fever . . . and it's £550 a year and two years count for three in service. Which is it to be? Make up your mind soon, 'cos lots of fellows are on the waiting list — snap at either."

Tarrington's tone, for all its bluff good nature, sounded final. Roger seeing his dreams of an African empire fade in that dingy room, all its tones having sombred with twenty years' fog and smoke into shades of yellow white and yellow brown, felt at first inclined to refuse haughtily either consolation for the loss of Zangia. But a married man and prospective father with very slight resources cannot permit himself the luxury of ill-temper. So he replied civilly that he would think it over and let Lord Tarrington know.

As he left the first floor of the building he crossed the path of the august Secretary of State himself, walking probably round the quadrangle to the India Office. There was no look of recognition in his deep-set eyes. How different from two and a half years ago when he had been hailed by this statesman as an authority on East Africa far better worth listening to than Mr. Bennet Molyneux, now noting down complacently in his room below the fact that the Consulate at Zangia with its seven hundred pounds a year was to be offered to the acting man, Mr. Spencer Bazzard.

Brentham went down that evening — pretending he didn't care *in the least* for this definite set-back — to Reading, and, chartering a fly, drove out to Engledene. A rather late little dinner with Sibyl and Aunt Christa-

bel was followed by a long consultation with Sibyl in the Library.

Lady Silchester's plans had long been ready, though she seemed to develop them as she spoke. "Become my agent, Rodge-podge, in place of old Parkins. He's an out-of-date duffer. I'll either pension him off, or better still send him to live on the Staffordshire property. He's let that go down very much; it ought to yield twice its present rents. I'll give you £700 a year, and there'll be all sorts of legitimate pickings as well. You can have the Lodge at Englefield to live in. I'll do it up for you. Lucy can live there and go on having babies for the next ten years. I'm sure *I* don't want to ask her to dinner or to anything else, if she doesn't want to come. She needn't curtsy to me if we meet, if it's *that* she dislikes. . . .

"But you've *great* abilities, Roger. You've been *shamefully* treated by Lord W. . . . He's always tried to snub *me* . . . *I* don't know why . . . I'll tell you *what*. I'll *run* you. After all, I am a rich woman . . . now. You shall get into Parliament . . . and be a great Imperialist, as that seems to be going to become the fashion. What . . . *what* . . . WHAT a pity you married like that, all in a hurry! And you see it's done you *no* good with the Nonconformist conscience and those stuffy old things at the F.O. However, it's no good crying over spilt milk. *I'll* make a career for you!" And she looked at him with shining eyes, betraying her palpable secret. . . .

"This is awfully good of you, Syb," said Roger, not meeting her look. "But do you think it is fair on others? Why not put in your father——? Or one of your brothers?"

"*Rubbish!* Dad would make just as great a mess of the Silchester estates — only on a far bigger scale — as he is doing over his three hundred acres at Aldermaston. I think we'll send him up to care-take at

Glen Sporran and make him sell up the Aldermaston place. Helping him with loans is like pouring money into — what do you pour it into when it runs away? A sieve? And the two boys have both got jobs and are none too bright, at that. Besides, it's no fun working with brothers, and I'm going to throw myself heart and soul into the development of the Estate. It'll be . . . it'll be . . . what's two and a third from twenty-one? Well, at any rate, more than eighteen years before Clithy comes of age. In that time we'll have raised the annual value of the property to twice what it is now, and incidentally we'll have a glorious time, influencing people, don't you know, getting up a new opposition in Parliament, and making ourselves felt. . . ."

"Well, in any case, it's awfully good of you . . . *awfully* . . . somehow I don't deserve it. . . ."

"You don't, after the way you threw me over. But stick to me now, through thick and thin, and"— she was going to have added impulsively, "Oh, *Roger,* I *do* love you, I can't help it," and perhaps have flung herself on to a sofa with a burst of hysterical tears to salve all his scruples, but quickly thought better of this and added rather tamely, "And we'll make a great success of our partnership. And now we must go and play backgammon or bézique or something with Aunt Christabel, or she will come poking her nose in here to see what we're up to. How tiresome the old are! It's only on account of what the Queen would say that I keep her on here. She thinks you're 'dangerous' to my peace of mind, Roger. But if I had mother here instead she would be equally boring, and father can't bear to be separated from her, and the two of them would be *unthinkable.*"

Though some instinct told Roger Sibyl's scheme would never work, without damage to his peace of mind and his conjugal relations, he felt her Circe in-

fluence already. He accepted her offer — at any rate for one year. At the end of that time she and he should be free to cancel the arrangement. He decided for the present to lodge with his wife's parents and ride backwards and forwards till Lucy had had her baby. At the utmost he would have a bedroom at the Lodge and the Parkinses — Mrs. Parkins, at any rate — should not vacate it definitely till Lucy was able to set up house there. He wrote civilly but briefly to Lord Tarrington declining to go either to Norway or to Colombia, and resigned "with much regret" his commission for Zangia.

About this time he received two letters which gave him much to think about, but which he put at the back of his mind. I will give the shortest first: —

To Captain Brentham, F.R.G.S.,
H.B.M. Consul for Zangia.

School of Mines,
Jermyn Street, S.W.
October 5, 1889.

DEAR SIR,—

You will remember calling here in last July, just before I took my holiday.

You left with me for examination a series of rock specimens and some sediment of lake water from East Africa.

Of the rock specimens, at least six give indications of great interest. Those two labelled "Iraku I" and "Iraku II" are so rich in gold that their importance must have been apparent to yourself — unless you mistook the gold for iron pyrites, an inverse of the customary deception, which is generally the other way about. The specimen labelled "Marasha" is simply coal — rather shaley coal, probably a surface fragment. There are two specimens, unfortunately with their

labels missing or indecipherable, which are a hard bluish green serpentine rock, obviously related to the "blue ground" of South Africa and probably diamondiferous. A fifth specimen yields evidence of wolframite, and in three other samples there is much mica. The lake sediment is being further examined by a colleague of mine. He believes it to be an indication of the formation of phosphates in the lake bed or shores which should be of great importance to agriculture as a constituent of chemical manure. These phosphates might be derived from birds' dung in great quantities, from guano in fact.

I assume you have duly registered the exact geographical localities of these specimens? Otherwise, they are very tantalizing, for they evidently indicate — if they come from one region and not from a wide area of travel — one of the wealthiest of African territories.

Pursuant to your wish, however, I shall treat the matter as confidential. But if you can at any time supply me with the exact geographical information I require I shall be pleased to write a report on the collection for the Petrographical Society or for the confidential information of the Government: whichever you prefer.

Yours faithfully,
DANIEL RUTTER.

Unguja,
August 26, 1889.

DEAR CAPTAIN BRENTHAM,—

Mrs. Stott and I, we thank you very heartily for your kind remembrances of us. The generous present of tea you sent us as soon as you got back to England reached our good friend Callaway a little while ago and I found it here waiting for us when I arrived from the interior.

Captain Wissmann has had a wonderful series of victories over the Arabs and Wangwana, which in the good providence of God have cleared the way between Ugogo and the coast. I heard something of this in the Happy Valley last April; so, as we were running terribly short of supplies and as we felt "seed time was come" and that the Lord desired us to reopen our Burungi Station, and establish his tabernacle strongly in this glorious place — Manyara —"ripe unto harvest"— I felt my way cautiously up the Valley and through the Irangi country to Burungi. The place was not any worse treated than when you left it — you made a great impression on the Wagogo — so, as their elders begged me to rebuild the station I left some of our trained workers to do so. Besides that, Captain Wissmann, whom we met near-by, has lent us two German sergeants — biddable men and clever with their hands. They'd been sick, and wounded in the legs and he said it would do them good to have a spell of quiet sedentary life. He also put under their orders a guard of five Sudanese soldiers to guard the station whilst it is being rebuilt. So here I am at the coast, chopping yarns with Mr. Callaway, and laying in great supplies which I have been able to buy out of the price of that ivory you shot for us.

Captain Brentham, you don't know what a mine of wealth the Happy Valley is, and the cliffs and mountains on the western side (Iraku and Ilamba). I am an Australian, and before I found Christ I had a course of instruction as a mining engineer. The rocks in and about the Happy Valley tell me at first sight more than they would an ordinary Englishman. I suppose some one will have to find out this, sooner or later. I'd much sooner it were *you*. You may yet get it taken over by Great Britain. At any rate, if you came out here and prospected you would see what I mean.

What did you do with the specimens you took away with you for analysis? Did you lose them on your way to the coast? Maybe if the Happy Valley is to come under the Germans they would give you a concession. This Captain Wissmann seems to like you, and he said it was far from his Government's intention to drive away English missionaries or English capital. He likes the English very much and speaks English very well.

I only write this because they say here you are not coming back as Consul. I am sorry. Why not then come out on your own? I've opened your letter to Mrs. Stott, which came with the tea, and *right glad* I was to hear — and so will she be — that you'd married poor Lucy Baines. *Right glad.* Bring her out here with you, and Mrs. Stott shall look after her whilst you go round prospecting and staking out your claims.

We may not see eye to eye over the Lord's work. The Lord hasn't revealed himself to you yet as He has to us. He will in His own good time. But you've got the root of the matter in you. I never yet met an unbeliever who was so reverent and so tender of other people's beliefs. . . . You're a good man, if you'll forgive my saying so. You wouldn't ever interfere with our work here, I know. It's getting on *grand.* We baptized the Chief of the Wambugwe and fifty of his men in the Lake at Manyara just before you left, and please God, we've saved the whole valley from Islam.

Mrs. Stott had always a first-class opinion of you, though you weren't of our way of thinking in religion. She is sure you'll always stand up for the natives and protect their rights. I hope I haven't been taking a liberty, writing this letter. If you don't like to come out yourself, any one you sent we should trust to do the right thing and would show him round. Otherwise,

we have been careful to say *nothing* about the Happy Valley, and so far no Arabs and no Germans have troubled us.

May God's blessing rest on you and on your sorely tried wife. I feel sure there are happier days in store for her.

Your sincere friend — if you'll allow me to say so.

JAMES EWART STOTT.

In regard to the School of Mines Report, Roger for acquitment of conscience and because he always liked to do the right thing, sent a résumé of Professor Rutter's analysis to the F.O., stating that the specimens referred to had been picked up by him on his recent tour through the interior of German East Africa.

In reply, the Under Secretary of State was directed to thank Captain Brentham for this valuable information.

In reality it was decided to pigeon-hole the report, certainly to give it no publicity. Let the Germans find out for themselves the value of their territories. If they discovered they had bitten off more than they could chew, why . . . then. . . .

In January, 1890, Lucy was delivered of a son. Roger was hugely delighted. When he asked Lucy a week after the birth if she had any preference for a name — *her* father's, *his* father's, his own — she said in a faint voice but with some finality in the accent: "Let him be called 'John'!" Then, as he did not reply, she added, "John loved me and I wasn't worthy of his love. . . ."

"Well, and don't *I* love you?" answered Roger with a tinge of compunction.

"She's a bit wandery in her mind, sir," said the nurse. "Don't pay any attention to what she's a saying. She's mistook your name. Several times

since the baby was born she's seemed to be talking with a John, but it was *you* she was a thinkin' about, *I'll* be bound. She wants keeping very quiet. . . ."

Once Captain Brentham took up the affairs of the Silchester estates — which he did definitely in October, 1889, he went very thoroughly into their condition and their possibilities of development. He was not, of course, a trained, professional land agent, which was why his shrewd and original ideas of enhancing the value and productivity of land made the Institute of Land Agents so angry. But he knew something of surveying, and had been accustomed to value countries by the eye, to judge of soils, espy defects in farming, by his boyish life at Farleigh and his experiences in India and Africa.

Lord Silchester in his fondness for landscape beauty had preferred a lovely, unkempt, autumn-wistful wilderness to a possible brick-field, though to a geologist the clay was almost crying out to be turned to the service of man. He liked great spaces without a sign of man's habitation to mar the poem. Roger, though he had a strongly developed sense of the beautiful in Nature, yet combined with it a realization that much waste land in the England of latter days, and even in Scotland, is an offence and a temptation to discontent on the part of the landless. Another charm can be contributed to landscapes by the handiwork of man; provided the cottage is tastefully and soundly built, the manufactory — even the brick-kilns and chimneys — are of the right material for the neighbourhood, of harmonious colour and appropriate design.

In the Berkshire and Hampshire estates, woodlands required thinning, cattle wanted new blood and better breeding. The lobster fishery at Sporran Bay should certainly be developed. A proportion of the deer in Scotland and at Engledene might with advantage be

sold. The farmer tenants generally wanted shaking up. Some of them could well afford to pay twice their present rent and let him out of the increased rent-roll rebuild their houses, barns, granaries, pigsties and cow-sheds. Why, the dairy business alone might be trebled in value with this proximity of a milk-hungry London. Farmer Josling, a right-down superior man with much self-given education, should help him in this. Incidentally, with Sibyl's consent, he had given his father-in-law a life-lease of his farm as some acknowledgment of his excellent use of it, and his progressive influence on the other farmers.

The bracing outdoor life and constant riding, the hunting and shooting did his health a world of good. He had never looked so well, so set up and robust as he did at the age of thirty-two, as Sibyl's factotum. The worst of this was that he seemed more desirable than ever in Sibyl's eyes, as she admitted with her disarming frankness. "What a pity it is, Roger, the silly laws of this sanctimonious country will not permit polygamy. We are just in the prime of life, you and I. I am much better looking than I was ten years ago — I shudder at my old photographs — I wore a fringe then and a bustle, and a lot of hair down my back, and a terrible simper when I faced the camera. It's a crime against Nature that we can't marry. We should have the handsomest children and we could easily arrange matters with Lucy. She's not exacting."

Roger laughed at these speeches, but they made him a little uncomfortable. Had Sibyl been a complete stranger to him he might have succumbed long before to her wiles; few men of his build, his time, his complexion were Josephs. But the slight relationship between them acted as a barrier to concupiscence. It permitted a familiarity in speech and address which

made any closer intimacy repellent to his sense of decency. . . .

Sibyl, it must be admitted, was shameless when they were together. She would study his features attentively; admire the curl of his eyelashes, the outline of his profile, even the not quite classical prominence of the cheek bones, the virile twist upwards of his moustache, the firm chin and strong white teeth, the well-set ear and close-cropped hair at the back of his head: the while she pretended, pen in hand, to be considering his propositions. Thought-transference told him what this scrutiny meant, and he would colour a little in shame and become abrupt in manner — even say to himself, "This *can't* go on — I wish she'd think of something else. . . ."

He was conscientiously attentive to Lucy at this time and she was really happy during this phase in Roger's life. In the spring she took up her residence in the Lodge at Englefield and made a comfortable home for her devoted husband, who seemed resolved to show her how happy he was in his marriage. Maud, from Farleigh, was a constant visitor, stayed weeks together with Lucy and Roger and served as a *trait d'union* with Sibyl, who allowed Maud to chaff her and scold her as she would no one else. Sibyl was quite civil to Lucy, did not bother her, left her alone except for an occasional greeting and the showing of some curiosity as to little John. "You may call him *John* as much as you like, but he's certainly Roger's child."

Clithy and his nurse were often sent down to the Lodge to be with Lucy; Sibyl deigning to say that her influence over children was a good one and Clithy was never fretful with *her*. In her mocking moods she called her little son "The Prince with the Nose" and declared he was under an enchantment. He had for

a child of three a preternaturally large nose, and, as she said to Roger, there could be no doubt as to *his* paternity. "How pleased Francis would have been! He was always so proud of the Mallard nose. Said it could be traced back in pictures to Charles I's reign — Anne of Denmark, who was rather larky after she had been married ten years, had a side-slip — you know what a *tipsy* court they were! — and bore a daughter to the Lord Chamberlain, who was particularly active in the revels. James overlooked her breach of good manners and ultimately gave the large-nosed little girl in marriage with Silchester Manor to a favourite, who founded the House of Mallard. Francis was going to have put this into his Memoirs, but he died, poor dear, leaving them three-quarters finished. I think *I* shall finish them for a lark. Will you help me?"

One reason why Lucy was dreamily happy at Englefield Lodge was that she seemed there to link up with the life of her girlhood. She had so often strolled round the precincts of Engledene with John Tilehurst, she dared not revisit for fear of meeting Mrs. Baines. But she would sometimes walk over the same path she had traced with John on that Sunday in June, 1886. She would sit on the seat at *The View* and go over once more in memory, and with a sad little smile, her naïve and petulant questions and answers on that Sunday walk. How she had told John her desire to encounter lions, and yet when a lion had visited their camp, what abject terror she had shown! Hangodi! That name was first uttered to her in Engledene Park and she remembered John saying it meant "The Place of Firewood."

One day Roger brought over to see her in the dog-cart old Mr. Baines — as he was beginning to be called. They both shed a few tears, but he told her with more sincerity than he usually put into his husky voice that

he exonerated her from all blame in the catastrophe which had overtaken his son (Lucy herself was not so sure). "Mother's taken it awfully bad, Lucy. She's goin' out of her mind, I'm fearin'. First she was writin' an' writin' to Lord Wiltshire, him as is Prime Minister, don't you know, to give your husband the sack as bein' the real cause of John's death. Then next she'd bother our member, wantin' 'im to ask questions in the 'Ouse of Commons, till at last they give up answerin' them. Then she set to and slanged that Missionary Society that John belonged to, sayin' they wasn't 'alf careful enough about 'is precious life. Now this spring, blessed if she ain't cut our Connexion! She won't go to Salem Chapel; goes to Church instead . . . St. Michael's. Shouldn't wonder if she ended up a papist! . . . S'pose you know *Ann's* in England? They're makin' a lot of fuss about 'er in Reading and London. Call her a Heroine. She's bin down with 'er 'usband — rather a half-baked 'feller — to see us; but 'er talk with Mother ain't done Mother much good, partly 'cos Ann wouldn't join 'er in abusin' you. She says to Mother: 'I just told you the plain truth in that letter. I'm not goin' to add nor subtract one word, an' you've gone and put into it much more than I ever said. Just leave Lucy alone to God's judgment. At any rate, John loved her and died believin' her true; and I dessay she was. Africa's a funny country and you must put down a lot to the climate.' . . . Ann's going back to Africa next autumn, with three more recruits and a lot of money to spend on the Mission School. Old Mrs. Doland sent for 'er and give 'er five hundred pounds. I tell 'er she ought to come and see you before she goes. P'raps she will, p'raps she won't. I told 'er you called your baby 'John,' and the tears reg'lar came into 'er eyes. . . ."

Roger owned to Maud he felt a bit restless in the spring and early summer of 1890. He couldn't get

Africa out of his mind, somehow. There was first the fuss about Stanley and the return of the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition — surely one of the most wasted feats of heroism and brave endeavour in the history of Africa. Then came the 1890 Agreement with Germany. This left the Happy Valley pretty much where it had lain — unmarked as yet — on the map, but by approximate latitude and longitude entirely German, as Roger knew. But the discussion of frontiers in Africa caused him to feel fretful and resentful at being "out of it." Sir Mulberry Hawk, who had negotiated the treaty, might surely have turned to him for enlightenment on this point and that? Even though he had left the African Service, there were his reports of 1884–5 and –6, and of 1887–9. He felt impelled to go and see Broadmead, always accessible to men of worth. Broadmead said it was a beastly shame — spite perhaps on the part of Molyneux — but every one now was thinking of the Recess. . . . London was becoming awfully stale. . . . He and Roger should meet in the early autumn. Broadmead would perhaps come down to Engledene and shoot Sibyl's pheasants, and talk over Africa. . . . If Roger was still hankering after East Africa, why didn't he suck up to "Wully MacNaughten?" He had a show place somewhere up in the Highlands, not an immeasurable distance from Glen Sporran.

"Who was Wully? Didn't Brentham know? Why, he had begun life as a small grocer in some Scotch town, and bankrupted through giving credit to the crofters. Not to be bested by Fate, he went out to China as a clerk and in twenty years had made quite a respectable fortune. Friends said out of tea, enemies out of opium, smuggled into India; probable cause, the great coolie traffic between China and the rest of the world, which prompted him to found a navy of tramp steamers to carry the coolies, many of

them over to Africa. Then he nibbled at East Africa; began with missionary stations, sort of atonement, don't you know, for anything naughty he'd done — Chaps in China used to call him 'MacNaughty-naughty'— s'posed to have had a half-caste family. Not a word of truth in it. However, there it was, and he couldn't go on refreshing Brentham's memory. Brentham had been in East Africa and must know all about MacNaughten there? . . ."

"Why, yes, I know, of course, he's the Chairman of the Chartered Company of Ibea — Mvita, you know."

"Well, they are going to extend their operations inland to the Victoria Nyanza and they want a go-ahead man as Governor. The chap at present out there is —— However, nothing can be done now. See you later on, give you a letter to him. . . . Tata."

If Roger was restless with unavowed hankerings after his first mistress, Africa, Sibyl, unconscious that he ever dreamed of release from her Circe toils, was radiant in the spring and summer of that particularly radiant year, 1890. Her prescribed mourning was over, so that the "horrid old Queen" could have no ground of objection to her entertaining like any other opulent peeress.

Roger had worked wonders with the estates, and before long the revenues, over which she would have control till her son's majority, would be increased by at least one-third. Her choice of him from a business point of view was amply justified. Her pulse quickened and her eyes grew brighter than their ordinary at the thought he might some day be her lover. If only that tiresome Lucy died in one of her confinements, he might even be her husband. Of course, she would most carefully avoid any foolishness which might give the least ground for scandal. If she did that; she could take life as pleasantly as Lady Ramsgate (the ridiculous one, called "Popsy"), or Lady

Ann Vizor. Every one knew that Popsy Ramsgate had had a child by her farm bailiff and kept it at the farm, and no one thought the worse of her. Ramsgate was dead. Lady Ann's stockbroker was obviously her lover, but he was very gentlemanly and no one would have guessed unless they had been specially told.

Even if Roger were free, she was not sure she wanted exactly to marry him. She would then lose her title or, at any rate, her social rights as a peeress. And Roger as husband might be too masterful. She wanted to "queen it" as a rich woman with intelligence and taste might do in those days. Now her mourning was over she would commence at once to give parties at 6A, Carlton House Terrace, which should put those of Suzanne Feenix quite in the shade. She would create a salon, to which should be attracted the younger bloods, the rebels of the Conservative Party. She would revivify Lord Randolph, join hands with Mary March, who had a wonderful *flair* for inveigling millionaires. She and a few other clever women — the Tennants, perhaps — should create a young and intellectual Conservative Party — or Unionist Party, if you liked. They would get hold of Choselwhit — perhaps Rhodes, if he came to England.

Lord Wiltshire should rue the day that he had snubbed her at a Chapelmead week-end — the last time poor Francis went out anywhere — and cut her at two Foreign Office receptions. The Brinsleys should be shown their reign was over.

Her initiates — she really founded the half-legendary "Souls" — should include the smartest writers and the most daring painters, the weirdest poets of the day. They would have their own press, if it wasn't too expensive, but Mary March's millionaires might manage that . . . hadn't she been introduced at one of Mary's theatre parties to an enormously rich and humble person called Tooley? Lady Tarrington had asked

him if he owned Tooley Street and the stupid creature had said: "Beg pardon, me lady?" Well, Tooley should be ensorcelled — perhaps an invitation up to Glen Sporran — and buy their newspaper for them.

And then she had an idea of starting a monthly Review which she would edit herself and which should tell the naked truth. No squeamishness. . . . Praed, the architect, should send them one or two of his queer storiettes. . . .

As to mother and father, they would spoil any circles with their banalities and old-fashioned ideas . . . and father's stories would never be followed to their finish by the modern young man or woman. They would devastate her circle. No. They must stop in the country. Mother seemed to be developing some internal complaint — probably indigestion or something which could be cured at Aix or Homburg — and she was becoming very strait-laced and anxious-eyed. Sibyl would take Roger's advice: buy up father's three hundred acres; it could be made a most profitable milk farm. Father should stay on as tenant at a nominal rent, with a bailiff to manage — perhaps that young Marden, the cricketer, who had married Lucy's sister.

Sibyl resolved to send mother to Aix at her expense and have Aunt Christabel to stay with her indefinitely as long as she wanted a chaperon.

As to her sisters: thank goodness, *they* were off her hands. They had married and gone away with their husbands to those blessed colonies, Clara to New Zealand and Juliet to British Columbia. Long might they remain there! Relations — unless very distant — were like reproaches or bad replicas of one's self. They sapped all one's originality. . . .

These were some of the musings of Sibyl when having her hair brushed by Sophie, or when undergoing Swedish massage under the firm but soothing hands of a blonde giantess; when breakfasting in bed; or under-

going a long train journey in a first-class compartment with a defective lamp.

There was no question in this year of Lucy's accompanying her husband to Glen Sporran. She was starting another baby and was firm about not wishing to go. Sibyl took this decision most amiably; said Lucy was quite wise, and further proposed that she should have Maud with her and care-take for Sibyl at Engledene House. Clitheroe was likewise to be left behind. His life in the Highlands was one long succession of dangerous colds and there wasn't enough accommodation for his retinue of nurses; especially as every one you asked nowadays must have with them a maid or a valet. Clithy had grown so absurdly fond of Lucy that Sibyl suggested jocosely they should change babies. She thought little John a perfect darling — *so* like Roger — why hadn't Lucy chosen *her* as godmother instead of Maud? No doubt Clithy would grow up more like a normal boy when the rest of his features balanced Anne of Denmark's nose. . . . Meantime, it was very fortunate things were as they were. And Lucy would oblige her enormously by looking after her boy while she was entertaining all those horrid people in the North.

Not that the house-party was to be a large one. It ran away with so much money, and people were never grateful. There would just be Stacy Bream; the Honble. Victoria Masham, the Maid of Honour — old Vicky Long-i'-the-tooth, Sibyl called her behind her back, and never imagined the nickname could be repeated and counteract the expense of a month's hospitality. *Must* have Vicky to keep in touch, you know, with what the old Queen was saying and doing — and an acolyte of Stacy's named Reggie, something in the Colonial Office — he could flirt with Vicky — and p'raps Arthur Broadmead. Then — for a day or two — that insufferable cad, Elijah Tooley —" but he's so

frightfully, frightfully rich and *might* be useful." Aunt Christabel, of course, would come, to keep order, and Aggie Freebooter and Gertie Wentworth would make up the house-party. Aggie Freebooter was that tiresome Lady Towcester's daughter—"one of six girls, my dear"—but when she was away from her mother's eye she was deliciously larky and awfully plucky, and didn't mind what you played at; while Gertie Wentworth—or the Honble. Gertrude—thirty-five, lots of money, dresses like a man, whisky and cigars, takes the bank at Roulette and loses everything but her temper.

"Well, at any rate," said Maud, "I'm glad Willowby Patterne is not in the party, *this* time. . . ."

"My dear! . . ." said Sibyl with a scream. "I've absolutely dropped him, after that row in the City and that extraordinary case in the courts which was compromised and hushed up. He's gone out to East Africa. Haven't you heard?"

Maud had not heard and cared very little what had happened to the spendthrift baronet. But Roger had, and was a little uneasy as to his cherished Happy Valley. Willowby Patterne, mixed up once more with a very shady Company to take over and boom a new mineral water—some proposition of Bax Strangeways—and a matter of slander and a club-steps whipping, settled out of court . . . and pending proceedings of his wife's for a separation; had decided abruptly to make "peau neuve" in East Africa. He had depicted the thrills of big-game shooting to one of his dupes just come of age and into possession of a pot of money. This young man would stand the racket of the expense—£5,000—and Willowby would put him up to all the dodges. And perhaps they might find minerals and get a concession. . . .

Whilst he was up in Scotland Roger did manage,

with the aid of Arthur Broadmead, to obtain an interview with Sir William MacNaughten on the subject of East African developments and the Company's future administration. But Sir William seemed vague, and much more interested and definite in regard to another question: King Solomon's Temple. Had Captain Brentham, as an Orientalist, ever given his mind to that problem, the shape and structure of the Temple, its adornment, and the hidden meaning of the Divine ordinances? No, Captain Brentham had not . . . but . . . er . . . no doubt it was very interesting and full of meaning . . . only . . . East Africa? . . .

"Oh, East Africa — our Charter — Oh, yes! Well, come and see me about that when I'm back in London. You know my address there? Westminster Palace Hotel?"

The Glen Sporran party broke up with the rain and chill winds of the equinox; but Roger stayed on there with Sibyl and Aunt Christabel: nominally to examine the affairs of the estate and the installation of the lobster fishery; in reality because his resolves had all dissolved before her insistence, her tears, her threats to make a scene. Circe triumphed; preened herself; became once more gay and debonnaire. But her wretched lover felt indeed a pig. Aunt Christabel, the very servants seemed to guess what Sibyl thought was kept wholly secret from the rest of the world.

A month's absence in Staffordshire and London, and a shamefaced visit to Engledene Lodge did something to restore his self-respect. He called on Sir William at his hotel, resolved to broach the subject of the East Afrita Governorship, but found him out. Nevertheless, to his delight there came a note to Pardew's Hotel from Sir William with these words in it: "Come to breakfast to-morrow morning at nine. I have something very interesting to discuss with you, and should value your opinion."

He arrived punctually. Lady MacNaughten was there — rather vinegary and with pursed lips. She dispensed the tea and coffee with a very strong Glasgow accent. The materials of the breakfast were — Roger thought — rather meagre for such wealthy people, who could afford to retain by the year this large suite of rooms. As no mention of East Africa was made during breakfast it was clearly more tactful to wait till the subject was introduced. Perhaps Sir William preferred not to discuss business in his wife's presence. At last, however, he finished his second cup of coffee, wiped his lips, said a grace of thanks for "our bounteous meal" in which Lady MacNaughten joined; and then asked Roger to accompany him to his sitting-room.

The folding doors were opened and shut behind them by an officious waiter; the window of the sitting-room looking out on incipient Victoria Street was also closed because the west wind was chilly. And Sir William then turned and said with great heartiness, pointing to a cardboard and *papier-mâché* contraption under a glass case:

"There! *That's* what I wanted to discuss with you, who know the East so well: a Model of King Solomon's Temple, made to my own design!"

* * * * *

The Governorship of the Mombasa Concession was shortly after conferred on Lady MacNaughten's nephew.

CHAPTER XVII

BACK TO THE HAPPY VALLEY

ROGER, ever since he returned from Scotland, resolved that a break with Sibyl should come as soon as he could see before him the re-opening of an African career. Only fortified with such a resolve could he face his wife's candid eyes and her unquestioning trust in him — or Maud's more quizzical gaze and occasional sardonic remarks. . . . "That old fox, MacNaughten," he said to himself, "had determined all along to evade the well-meant suggestions of candidates from the Foreign, Colonial, and India Offices, and as soon as he got his Baronetcy (which came with the New Year's honours) to take a line of his own."

However, Fate for once hastened the dénouement by causing Roger's father to catch cold over the excavation of the Basilica at Silchester, to neglect his cold, and to die of double pneumonia in the week preceding Christmas, 1890. Roger could not help being profoundly grateful to his archæological parent for dying *before* rather than after Christmas, because this decease, with the conventions in force, and Queen Victoria behind the conventions, absolutely freed him from the obligation to attend the elaborate Christmas and New Year festivities ordained by Sibyl at Engledene. She had set aside a suite of rooms — bedroom, sitting-room and office — at 6A, Carlton House Terrace, and would no longer hear of his staying at Pardew's Hotel when in London to transact business with her. There were times when he seriously considered shooting himself — and strange to say, all through this period of episodical infidelity he had never loved Lucy

better, or found her smiling silence or unimportant, unexacting conversation more soothing.

Her approaching confinement and his father's death together constituted a barrier of reserve that even Sibyl was bound to respect. He therefore utilized this respite to work assiduously at his plans for flight from the enchantress. He was most anxious after he was gone that no one should say with justification that he had let Lady Silchester down, had treated her badly, got things into a muddle, and then bolted.

As far back as the preceding October he had brought his younger brother, Maurice, the barrister, into the Estate Office to be his assistant. Sibyl could suggest no one else and told him he could make what arrangements he liked — if *only* — if — *only* he would not be *cruel* to her, not talk of going at the end of the trial year. As he had not complete confidence in Maurice becoming efficient for the head post, he had entered into a provisional arrangement for a first-class man to put over Maurice, selecting him at the Institute of Land Agents' recommendation.

So much therefore had been done to safeguard his employer's interests.

Then as to his own. The administration of his father's estate would eventually secure a total sum of £4,300 to each of the four children of the Rev. Ambrose Brentham, including the amount they had recently received by deed of gift. This, with other odds and ends of savings, gave Roger a capital of £5,000 to draw on.

As soon as Lucy was well over her accouchement, in January (1891), he had several long and confidential conversations with Arthur Broadmead, that friend in need to so many men who had fallen into holes of their own digging, and who sought rectification by extending the bounds of empire and making two blades of grass to grow where but one had grown before. Sev-

eral great Anglo-German financiers were seen in the City. The specimens and the School of Mines' report thereon were left in their hands: with the result that a small and select Anglo-German Syndicate was formed to prospect in the northern part of German East Africa. Into this pool Captain Brentham put £2,000 and was constituted for three years head of the enterprise with a good salary and very large discretion as to means and methods of developing the Happy Valley.

To Maud he next imparted his plans, and to his surprise they were received with cordial approval.

"You're *quite* right, Roger, I'm sure you've taken the road that will most probably lead to happiness and fortune. Lucy is certain to fall in with your scheme. She can stay on in England till her baby's weaned — it was sweet of you both to call it after me — I was so certain you were going to name it 'Sibyl'! Then she can place both the children with their grandparents at Aldermaston and come out and join you. And what is more, *I* will come too! I should *love* to!"

There now remained — he could not say "only remained," it was too portentous a crisis — the final scene with Sibyl. He thought it over many a night when he could not sleep, many a morning when he was going through estate business with her and she was leaning unnecessarily over his shoulder or furtively pinching the lobe of his ear. A written good-bye, and then immediate departure, would be cruel, and Sibyl might afterwards revenge herself on Lucy, left behind defenceless; or on Maurice. There were, besides, points of business he must discuss with her before leaving; at any rate give her the chance of asking questions and receiving answers.

So he summoned up courage one morning and telegraphed he wished to see her that afternoon in London. She was up for the "little season" which follows Christmas.

He was shown into her library at 6A, Carlton House Terrace. She had come in from skating at Princes, had changed into a wonderful tea-gown and was lying on a long couch over which a magnificent tiger skin had been thrown. A small inlaid Moorish table held a tea-tray.

Sibyl: "Have some tea? Tell him before he goes out" (referring to the retreating footman).

Roger: "Thanks very much, *no*. I have had tea and I've got a lot to tell you. So I don't want to lose time." (The door clicks to.)

Sibyl: "Well. You're very solemn. Draw up a chair. Come to give me a month's warning? But to do *that* you ought to stand. . . ."

Roger: "That's exactly what I *have* come for. . . ."

Sibyl: "Roger! *Don't* make horrid jokes. You wouldn't be so base — so — ungrateful — as *that*. . . ."

Roger: "It isn't an act of baseness, that's certain; and as to ingratitude, I think by going away I am doing the best thing altogether, so far as *you* are concerned. No!" (she is rising and pushing the tea-table out of her way as a preparation for drama). "You must let me explain myself — and *do* let us discuss this *quietly,* not as though we were acting a scene on the stage. Sibyl! Really the least said, soonest mended. We are in an *impossible* position. . . . I blame myself more than you. . . ." (Sibyl: "Thank you!") "I am a cad . . . an *utter* cad. I loathe myself sometimes so much I can't look at my face in the glass or meet my wife's eyes. I am going back to Africa . . . going out of your life. . . . You must forget all about me . . . and marry some decent man." (His voice sounds strangled and he turns away to recover himself.)

Sibyl: "It seems to me it is *you* that are becoming stagey. What *does* all this mean? Has Lucy found out we've been lovers and made a fuss? . . . Or is

it money? Have you got into debt? *Do* be explicit!"

Roger: "It's none of these things. I only mean I have out-stayed my year with you, my trial year, and now I claim my liberty. I am going once more to try for a career in Africa . . . and . . ."

Sibyl (white with anger): "Well, *go* to Africa! I never wish to see you again! *Go! Go! Go!*" (She half rises as if to expel him with her hands, but he saves her the trouble, takes up his hat, gloves and stick, walks out, closes the door of the library gently and lets himself out of the house.)

The next day he leaves at the door a tin despatch box and a letter containing its key. The box has amongst its contents the bunch of keys he has used on the Estate, a great bundle of accounts, notes, and suggestions for the immediate future. In the letter which accompanies this box he tells Sibyl all about the arrangement he has made in her Estate Office, advises her to keep on his brother Maurice who shows signs of uncommon ability, but for some time yet to retain as Head Agent Mr. Flower, provisionally engaged for a year, who is highly recommended by the Institute of Land Agents. Both alike are now well acquainted with the affairs of the Silchester Estate. . . . He asks her to be kind to Lucy who will remove as soon as she is strong enough to Aldermaston and meantime remains at the Lodge under Maud's care. Later on, when her child is old enough to be left in the grandparents' keeping, Lucy and Maud will join him in East Africa. His address in London till he leaves for Marseilles on February 28 will be Pardew's Hotel. . . .

He will never forget her kindness . . . *never* . . . at a critical time in his life. And will not say "goodbye," because when he has "made good" in Africa he will come back on a holiday and hope to find the Es-

tate flourishing and Silchester grown into a sturdy boy.

From what I knew of Sibyl I should say she at first took the breaking off of their relations very hardly. . . . "Agony, rage, despair" . . . much pacing up and down the library. . . . Passionate letters half-written, then torn up into small fragments and thrown into the fire. Then — for she was a slave to her large household and magnificent mode of life — her maid Sophie enters the library and reminds My Lady that she is due that night to dine at the Italian Embassy. So Sibyl has to submit to be coiffed, dressed, jewelled, and driven off in a brougham — a little late, and that intrudes on her mind, because she has heard you should never be late to an Ambassador's invitation, it is a sort of *lèse-majesté*. But to cope with the demands made on her, she has to force her heart-break to the back of her mind and sustain her reputation for gay beauty, daring expression, and alert wit — in French as well as English. There was a Royalty there to whom she had to curtsey and with whom she had to sustain a raillery, shot with malice, which required considerable brain-concentration; for though the retorts must call forth further bursts of laughter from the chorus that watched the duel, they must be free from the slightest impertinence.

Roger's abrupt leave-taking only remained like a dull ache behind her vivid consciousness of triumph; of celebrated men, bestarred with orders, swathed with ribbons; of women sparkling with jewels and rippling in silks; of a Prince who might "make" you with a smile or "mar" you with a frown; of many enemies concealed as friends; of wonderful music and exquisite food, for which she had no appetite. It was not until she had re-entered her dressing-room to be unrobed that she had once more the mind-space to reconsider Roger's farewell and what life would mean to her

without his constant companionship. Then, foreseeing otherwise a ghastly night of turning things over and over in her thoughts, she told Sophie she had bad neuralgia; and opening a tiny little casquet with a tiny little gold key on her bangle she took from it the materials for a sleeping draught, compounded them cautiously — she was the last person in the world to commit suicide, even by mistake — swallowed the dose and half an hour afterwards slipped into oblivion.

The next morning she awoke with the inevitable headache, and the heartache returned. But there was the breakfast tray to distract her thoughts, and there were the morning letters. Among these was an invitation to meet an Oriental Potentate in very select company — an opportunity for display which she had coveted — and an invitation to dine with the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Benson, which she had sought for, as she wanted to allure the young Bensons into her circle of "souls."

She then reflected, while having her hair brushed, that it might be just as well that the breach with Roger had come before she had been in any way tarnished by the breath of scandal. People had already chaffed her about her handsome Land Agent. She would act so as to throw dust in their eyes, and certainly not play the part of *la maîtresse délaissée*. Later on in the morning, therefore, she wrote to Lucy saying she had accepted Roger's resignation with the *deepest* regret, but would not stand between him and his beloved Africa. Yet she hoped Lucy would not *think* of leaving the Lodge until she was perfectly strong. She also told Roger's successor, Mr. Flower, she had confirmed the arrangement Captain Brentham had outlined and requested him to call on her in the following week.

In the afternoon of that day she issued the instruction "Not at home," intending to retire to her bed-

room and have a good cry. But the full indulgence in this luxury was baulked by the announcement of her cousin Maud Brentham. Maud's name some while ago had been put on the short list of people to whom "Not at home" did not apply.

Maud had really been asked to call by the timorous Roger, to see how Sibyl was "taking it." So Sibyl, divining this, received her affectionately; and only complained of the excessive brilliance of the ambassadorial party of the night before and the dead set made at her by the Prince having reduced her this following afternoon to the condition of a doll with the sawdust escaping from every seam. She talked quite calmly of Roger's approaching departure and the arrangement of Lucy's affairs after he had gone. "Why can't you and she transfer yourselves from the Lodge to the House at Engledene and stay there indefinitely, till you take ship for Africa and golden joys? Lucy's a godsend with poor nervous, peevish little Clithy. I *must* leave the child there a good deal at present. He looks very peeky if he comes to London. And at Easter I shall shut up this house and go off to travel for quite a long time. . . ."

"But not to East Africa, I trust . . .?" said Maud with some anxiety.

"Maud! You're a *toad!*"

When two very sad women came to Victoria on an appallingly cold and foggy morning to take leave of Roger — who was departing for Paris-Marseilles to join his steamer — they were joined by a third, accompanied by an aloof footman carrying wraps; and books for Roger's solace on the journey. Sibyl put her arm round Lucy's waist, as they were saying farewell; and Roger having kissed his wife — most tenderly — and his sister — hesitated for one second, and then kissed Sibyl too.

* * * * *

From Roger Brentham to his Wife.

H.B.M. Agency,
Unguja,
March 29, 1891.

[Very near the second anniversary of our happy marriage. Barely two years married and already two children. I wonder how baby Maud is getting on?]

DEAREST LUCE,—

I sent you a cable from Port Said saying "All right thus far." I hope you got it? I arrived here by the French steamer yesterday.

I enjoyed the journey to Paris and Marseilles. But after we had left that port for a very stormy Mediterranean I went through a beastly time. I would have given everything I possessed — except you — to find myself back at Engledene and with all these African plans undone. I have led such a full life within the last two years, have had the very best of England; and the flatness of existence on an old-fashioned steamer came home to me crushingly during the nine days' voyage between Marseilles and Port Said. Such a hush after the noisy whirlpool of life in London in Sibyl's circle; or even the gay doings at Engledene when we had got over the first of our mourning for the poor old Pater. There were no newspapers and no news — nine days completely out of the world. No one on board I knew and no one who had ever heard of me. It brought home to me my utter insignificance! I felt a bit better when we passed through the Suez Canal. The sound of Arabic always stimulates me to adventure. The cold weather left us in the Red Sea. I passed most of my time mugging up Swahili again and trying to revive my Arabic with some Syrians who were on board. Aden cheered me up considerably.

There were the jolly laughing Somalis once again, and I engaged four bright boys to go with me as servants and gun-carriers out hunting. You could light up a dark passage with their flashing teeth! When we reached Unguja I admit I felt some uncomfortableness. It is so awkward returning as a person of no status to a place where one has been an official. But as you know, I had taken the precaution, a month before I started, of writing confidentially to Sir Godfrey Dewburn about my plans and intentions. The Dewburns *could not have been kinder.* He sent the Agency boat to meet me with one of the new Vice-Consuls in it, and here I am at the Agency, installed as their guest till I can assemble my *safari* and get away up-country. Lady Dewburn plies me with questions about you and our children. . . .

The Dewburns are expecting promotion to a diplomatic post — possibly Persia. They feel their work here is done, now that the Anglo-German Treaty is ratified and Unguja is a British protectorate. The treaty has had the best effect on Anglo-German relations here and incidentally on my prospects of co-operation. I am to see Wissmann as soon as I land at Medinat-al-Barkah. Eugene Schräder, who is all-powerful in Anglo-German finance, has written out to him. I have little doubt we shall get a Concession over the Happy Valley for our syndicate.

Landing at Medina will be a little out of the direct route to Irangi, but I shall travel across the Nguru country, now quite pacified and safe, and try to take Hangodi on the way to Ugogo. What associations the sight of it will revive if I do! That halting-place below the great rise, where we had tea together in the shade when I met you in your machila with Halima, and you were so taken aback that you called me "darling"— *I* haven't forgotten! And talking of Halima, reminds me to say that she sends you her many salaams.

Andrade is cook with the Dewburns and Halima has some function as housemaid. I have arranged when the Dewburns go that Andrade is to join me; so when you come out, my darling, Halima shall be there to wait on you and on Maud.

It'll be rather horrid meeting the Bazzards again at Medina. They returned recently from a long holiday in England — an East Coast watering-place chiefly, where Bazzard, who doesn't know a yacht from a barge, got elected to the local Yachting Club. I hear that Mrs. B. looks forward confidently to her husband succeeding Dewburn when the latter is promoted; but I think there is not the slightest chance of it.

The Stotts must have got my letter by now telling them I was on my way. Of course there has been no time for a reply. But Callaway tells me the last news of them was good. I have already picked up quite a third of my Wanyamwezi "faithfuls" who were hanging about Unguja since Willowby Patterne's *safari* was paid off. That man is a *scoundrel!* He came out here and made free use of my name, pretending even he had letters from me which he never produced. He therefore got favours and concessions and secured my original hundred men — or what was left of them. His tour through the Mvita hinterland was one long sickening path of slaughter: he and his companion — a poor youth who was often down with dysentery and whom Patterne treated brutally — must have killed about three times the amount of game they could use for food or trophies. His ravages even shocked his carnivorous porters and annoyed the natives. Do you know, I think he must have had just a glimmering about the existence of the Happy Valley — he was always following me about at Glen Sporran and cocking an eye at my correspondence. Because though ostensibly only big-game slaughtering they made straight for the *south* side of Kilimanjaro (in-

stead of keeping to the British Sphere); and when the *safari* reached Arusha ya Juu he tried to get guides for "Manyara"— the porters swear he used the word. He cross-questioned some of them as to where they had been with you and me. However, fortunately he had an odd trick of getting himself hated by all the native tribes he met, as well as by his own porters, whom he used to flog atrociously. (They tell disgusting stories about these floggings which I cannot put down on paper.) When his caravan got past the slopes of Meru it fell in with "our Masai," as I call them. And then it was like one of the old fairy stories of the bad girl who tried to follow the good girl down the well into fairyland, and couldn't remember the countersign. Instead of hitting it off with the Masai he vexed them in some way and at last they turned on him and forced his *safari* to go back to Kilimanjaro. At least the Wanyamwezi porters refused to continue the journey, which comes to the same thing. He has left for England — I am glad to say — or I might have fallen foul of him. The two of them killed enough ivory to pay the costs of the whole outfit. So he swears he is coming back again and will then take a large body of armed men with him and wipe out the Masai.

Now I must bring this long letter to a close. Much love to dear old Maud, and my most respectful greetings to my cousin and late employer. I found her fame for beauty, wit, and dominance over Society had reached even to Unguja. . . . In fact I rather winced at turning over three-months-old illustrated papers here and seeing pictures of her in wonderful costumes or — in the magazines — as a type of English beauty. . . . How far away it all seems! . . .

Your loving
RODGE.

From the same to the same.

German Headquarters,
Medinat-al-Barka,
April 30, 1891.

DEAREST,—

You will be rather surprised that a month has gone by and I have got no nearer my goal than this! But firstly I went down with a bad go of fever — all right now — and secondly I could not hustle von Wissmann, who is Imperial Commissioner here and who has been very kind — and thirdly the rains are so appalling just now that overland travelling is well-nigh impossible till the country dries up a little. But I am not losing my time otherwise. I am getting everything fixed up with the Germans, and next shall only have to arrive at an understanding with the natives. The boundaries of our Concession (which will include the Stotts) cover the Happy Valley from the water-parting between the Bubu and the Kwôu on the south to the escarpment at the north end of the lake, and on east and west include all the water-shed of Lake Manyara, Iraku and Fiome. So they have dealt with us generously.

Wissmann I like immensely. He is a great man and has the interests of the real natives thoroughly at heart. Our old friends the Stotts have impressed him favourably and they are to be woven into my schemes of development. Wissmann from the first asked me to put up at his headquarters and treated me like a colleague in the opening up of Africa. So I was saved the disagreeableness of staying at my former Consulate with the Bazzards.

Mrs. Bazzard has been sickly in her protestations of friendship, utterly insincere as you know. I fancy she is turning her pen now on Sir Godfrey, in the hope she may oust *him*. Considering how kind the Dew-

burns were to them it is odious to note how she tries to disparage him. . . .

There is not much news from the interior. I hear that Ali-bin-Ferhani got rewarded by the Germans for saving Hangodi Station, and that Mbogo is still chief there in name, the real chief of the district being Ann Anderson, or Mgozimke —" The man-woman," as the natives call her.

In haste to catch the mail. . . .

Your loving
ROGER.

From the same to the same.

Mwada,
The Happy Valley,
July 28, 1891.

MY OWN DEAR WIFE,—

I reached the shores of the lake — which I now find is called Lawa ya mweri — and the end of the Happy Valley on — as near as I can reckon — June 20. (The Stotts have no almanacs and are quite indifferent to dates, times, seasons; they live under some enchantment, they tell me, since they came here, like the legends of people carried off to Fairyland.) I met Mr. Stott at Burungi, which now looks a flourishing station. The Wagogo seem to me quite recalcitrant to Christianity, but the Stotts have to keep this up as a depôt for their traffic with the coast, and they are helped in this by the German Government. . . . Stott and I journeyed together through the Irangi country almost in state. The Stotts have become enormously popular as " medicine men." They have stopped epidemics of small-pox by vaccinating the people, have shown them how to stay the ravages of the burrowing fleas, and they are making a dead set against infanti-

cide, having found one or two leading chiefs sufficiently intelligent to appreciate the importance of a large population. Formerly, as you may remember, there was such a prejudice against female babies that they were often exposed to the hyenas outside the tembe, and all children who came into the world by an irregular presentation, or with a tooth already through the gum, likewise all twins, were either thrown into the lake or abandoned to the carnivorous ants or prowling carnivores. (There is a curious legend here — Stott says — that sometimes these unhappy infants were picked up by female baboons of the Chakma type and nursed by them with their own offspring.)

Well: you can imagine, having lived already in these parts, what the infant death-rate amounted to. But the local chiefs having had the whole theory exposed to them have sanctioned a crusade against infanticide for any reason. The Wa-rangi have further been persuaded to abandon the custom of burning alive women suspected of adultery. I did not like to tell you at the time, but as we passed through the Irangi country in November, '88, they were actually killing unfortunate women in this manner. They believe that if a man goes out hunting and makes a bad miss in throwing his spear or assegai at an elephant it is because his wife is untrue to him at home! So when he returns from the chase his wretched spouse is trussed up and bound to the top of a great pile of brushwood.

Consequently, at several of the Irangi villages on our way up the Bubu valley the women who were the wives of sporting duffers came out in deputations to dance round the worthy Stott till they quite embarrassed him; especially as the dances were of an indelicate nature.

The Stotts have now quite a nice-looking station to the south-east of the main lake, on a grassy rise with the Mburu river on the south and a much smaller salt lake on the east. This looks like sparkling ice

under the sun and is nearly solid — ? salt — ? soda. Its borders seem to be a kind of salt lick for the game which is once more swarming and singularly tame. There are no rhinos, fortunately, and the tricky tempered elephants and buffaloes prefer the wooded regions farther north and west. The lions, leopards and chitas are so glutted with food that they leave the domestic cattle and human beings alone; and the myriad zebras, antelopes, elands, bushbuck, giraffes, wart-hogs and ostriches are quite willing to live at peace with mankind. Secretary birds and saddle-billed storks are numerous and keep the snakes down; marabou storks and vultures devour all the carrion and even the filth round the native villages — so the country seems healthy. Enormous flocks of crowned cranes and bustards look after the locusts and grasshoppers. The flamingoes by the lake shore are as numerous as they were in our time. . . .

The Stotts' station is built after the fashion of the native houses of the district: long, continuous, one-storied "tembes" forming a hollow square, inside which the cattle and sheep are kept at night. . . .

But what I am longing to describe is the country of Iraku. I went there with Stott, you may remember, whilst we stayed waiting for news of poor John Baines. I was immensely taken with it then. But now I have seen it more in detail I am enthusiastic. It resembles — I can't help saying — a little Abyssinia — from all I have heard and read of Abyssinia, though it is not at such great altitudes. Its natives are actually related in speech and type to those of Southern Abyssinia. I should estimate the average height at five thousand feet, with ridges, peaks and craters touching seven or eight thousand; so that the temperature is almost perfect — nights always cool, not to say cold. It is a fertile, fruitful land of ups and downs, richly forested valleys, plenty of streams, grassy uplands like

the Berkshire downs: indeed a very English-looking country. Somewhere here, not far from the escarpment and the Happy Valley, we will have our home, dearest, and here you and Maud shall join me as soon as ever you can come out. How I *long* for that coming. There are times when, in spite of the Stotts and their cheeriness, I feel sick with melancholy and loneliness. The change from that English life has been too abrupt. As soon as ever little Maud is weaned and able to be left with your mother you must pack up and come. My Agents in the City, Messrs. Troubridge, who pay you (I hope) your allowance quarterly, have all my instructions as to your passage, and Maud's, your outfit, etc. Once I can get you two out here I shall settle down contentedly enough and make a fortune — I doubt not — on which, some day, we can retire and live happily ever afterwards.

Meantime as I have written very fully, only show this letter to Maud and say as little as possible about it to Sibyl, lest she repeat my account of the Happy Valley to that scoundrel, Patterne. She says she never sees him now, and she certainly ought not to after the reputation he has left behind in East Africa; but as likely as not she will resume the acquaintance, and he is the last sort of person I wish to meet in these parts . . . Mrs. Stott of course sends love to you and the kindest greetings. Her enthusiasm for her Creator is unabated, because they have so far had wonderful good fortune since they blundered into this haven of rest and beauty in October, 1888. If one or other of them did not have once in a way to go down to the coast they would enjoy — she says — perfect health. . . .

Your loving

ROGER.

CHAPTER XVIII

FIVE YEARS LATER

ROGER BRENTHAM has now lived consecutively for five years in the Happy Valley; or, to be accurate, at Magara, in a natural fortress looking down on it from the Iraku escarpment. Much of his work, however, lies in the plains below, and he has a comfortable rest-house near the Stotts' station — but not too near, for Kaya la Balalo [1] — as they have named it — is now the centre of a considerable native village, a little too noisy, dusty, and smelly for fastidious nerves and noses.

In these five years a great transformation has taken place in and around the Happy Valley. A land settlement has been come to with the natives, and is duly laid down in a rough survey and in signed documents drawn up in German and Swahili. The native villages, plantations, pasture ground and reserves are clearly defined so that they may be placed outside the scope of white encroachment; but in coming to this agreement, some common-sense regard has been had for highly mineralized land not already inhabited and suitable for profitable exploitation (with a share of the profits going to the native community) and for the location of European settlements, farms, mission stations, laboratories and experimental plantations. In short, both parties are satisfied. There is sufficient security for the investment of much white capital in this region of undeveloped wealth; and the Negroes are reassured regarding their homes and future prospects of expansion. They have been shrewd bargainers and

[1] "The City of God."

have had the Stotts as their advocates. The news of their fair and even generous treatment has attracted considerable native immigration, especially from the Nyamwezi countries; Brentham's Wa-nyamwezi porters have been useful recruiting agents, and the district is well off for labour. The native chiefs administer rough justice as between native and native. Brentham and three of his German colleagues, as well as Mr. Ewart Stott, hold commissions from the German Government as justices of the peace, and there is a German commandant at a central post in the Irangi country who presides over a Court of Appeal from their decisions. But as a rule, these Concessionaires, having originally inspired confidence in von Wissmann's mind during his great pacification of German East Africa, are left pretty free to administer the area of their large Concession and to keep order within its limits. This, with the cordial co-operation of the native chiefs, they find comparatively easy, and in this the friendship between Roger and the outlying Masai tribes, who have not forgotten the blood-brotherhood of 1888, has been very useful. The Happy Valley has nothing to fear from Masai raids and has at present no outside enemies.

Lucy and Maud joined Roger in the spring of 1892, and after four years' happy life in this curiously secluded region — so cut off as it was from African troubles, from wars between Arabs and Europeans, raids of tribe upon tribe, risings against the Germans, squabbles with British pioneers — are now preparing to return to England. Lucy has had two more children, one born in 1893 and the other in 1895. She is anxious to take them both home and place them in safety there; at the same time she hungers for a sight of the older two whom she has not seen for over four years. She is in fact a prey to that divided allegiance which has so often marred the happiness of the wives of men engaged in Indian or African work: a desire to be

with their husbands, and yet an anxiety about the health and bringing-up of their children in a barbaric environment. The Stotts consider they have solved this question by parting with their oldest child and letting their other children run the African risks and grow up — if they survive — with only an African outlook. They are true colonists in intention. But settlers like the Brenthams always envisage an eventual retreat to the home country and an English education for their children.

They are assembled on the open ground beyond the garden of their house in Iraku, to take leave of their German associates in the Concession: Herr Treuherz Hildebrandt (whose sentimental fore-name is usually disguised under the initial T) and Dr. Wolfgang Wiese. Hildebrandt is the mining engineer who is ascertaining the mineral wealth of the mountain region bordering on the Happy Valley; Dr. Wiese, besides being in case of need the physician and surgeon of the little European community, is a very clever analytical chemist, botanist, zoologist and horticulturist, one of those all-round men that Germany so often produced before the war and so often contributed in still earlier days to the opening up of the British Empire. He has arrived in haste from his dwelling a mile distant to bid farewell to the gracious Mrs. Brentham. Wiese is spectacled and bearded, a little shy in manner with strangers, and inclined to melancholy when his thoughts turn to the young wife who accompanied him to Africa about the time that Lucy and Maud came out to join husband and brother. Less fortunate than they, she had died from an attack of coast fever. Thereafter he had found some mitigation of his loneliness in the pleasant home created by Lucy and Maud, so that he regards them with affection and thinks they must be the very best type of British women. As, however, he has work in progress at his laboratory of crucial

importance, his farewells are prompt and soon concluded.

But his colleague, the mining engineer Hildebrandt, stays longer, being very loath to part with Maud Brentham. He is tall, passably handsome, soldierly, well-knit, a lint-white blond with violet-grey eyes like Lucy's. Though he comes from Saxony he is more of the Friesland type, in the contrast between his straw-yellow hair (mostly shaved to stubble, it is true) and his dark-grey eyes. He has the further attraction to which many women would succumb in being very musical (out of business hours). In those days before gramophones he was a welcome guest for the music which welled up in his brain and poured from his fingers. Roger had managed with infinite difficulty to import and carry up on an ox-cart a cottage piano of German make, and on this instrument Hildebrandt would waft his listeners to other scenes — of far away and long ago — with his waltzes, sonatas, minuets, marches, and songs without words, sometimes playing by ear with that wonderful musician's memory; sometimes, when he took things seriously, from the enormous supply of printed music which a sympathetic company had allowed him to carry up-country.

A year after their first meeting he had proposed to Maud, and had renewed this offer of marriage on two other occasions. But she had been firm in her refusal, though she appreciated his good looks and frank manliness, and almost loved him for his music. But she declared the difference in their ages — twelve years — was an insuperable objection; secondly she did not wish to marry, so that she might always live with Roger and Lucy and their children. If they failed her she would make a career of her own — become a New Woman and agitate for women's rights. "On top of all that, nothing would induce me to live in Germany, though I've no doubt you are in the right, and it's the finest

country in the world. But I'm so interested in watching English developments. When we have finished with Africa and made our pile we're going to settle at home and improve our own country."

"Well then, if you'll marry me, I'll go and live in England with you. . . ."

But Maud has remained obdurate. In spite of this they have settled down in course of time, and in battling together against the anxieties, difficulties, and dangers of African colonization, into very good comrades. Maud and Roger and even Lucy all speak German to some extent, and the Germans of the Concession have an even greater facility in English. Conversation is often a medley of both languages and much laughter at each other's mistakes. Lucy contributes to the common stock of entertainment very little in the way of talent. She is naturally fond of music: sweet melodies, deep harmonies bring the tears into her eyes; gay tunes make her want to dance; but she is no musician and no dancer. Maud has a pleasant contralto voice and is a good accompanist. Lucy's water-colour painting has long since been given up as a futility in this age of universal talent. But she makes botanical collections now with some deftness and ability under the instruction of Dr. Wiese, whom in this direction she really helps. Yet considering she has borne four healthy children in six years of marriage no one can ask much from her in the way of accomplishment in the arts; and by the time she has attended to her offspring's needs with the perfunctory help of Halima — herself saddled with two brown hybrids, bearing extravagant Portuguese names — mended their clothes and her husband's, and her own, and generally directed the housekeeping, it is felt she has done her duty to the little community. Nevertheless though she is not particularly witty, original, or wise, and has no great physical attraction for any one but her husband, and

is prone at times to be silent with a gentle melancholy, she has an inherent gift for making people feel at home. She has a capacity for listening unweariedly to the longest stories, and is a sympathetic confidant to any one in trouble.

So Bergwerksingenieur Hildebrandt said good-bye to her with nearly as much sentiment as infused his voice and his hand-grip when he took leave of his liebste Kamerad, "Meess Mowd" (Maud always said that his pronunciation of her name robbed his courtship of all romance). He looks indeed so sad at parting from these two dear Englishwomen that Maud is nearly tempted to kiss him; only that he might have misconstrued her motherliness.

The two children in the early morning — it is just after sunrise — are laughing and crowing with the excitement of the forming *safari* and the coming start. The three-year-old boy, Ambrose, is named after his grandfather; the baby girl has been called Sibyl at her mother's request. In all probability Lucy had never even so much as suspected that there was more than cousinly affection between her husband and Lady Silchester: it would have taken something like ocular evidence to make her doubt Roger's fidelity. At first Sibyl had frightened and humbled her, but during the last year of their association, at Engledene, she had been coolly kind and had shown something like gratitude for Lucy's care of her ugly fretful little boy. Before Lucy had left to rejoin her husband in East Africa, Sibyl had said: "I expect you'll have a lot more children. If you have another girl, call it by my name. I should like to be associated with a child of Roger's. Promise? Very well then: in return I'll give an eye to little John and fat Maud whilst you are in Africa. Indeed I cannot see why they shouldn't move over here from Aldermaston, when your own

people get tired of them; and share Clithy's nursery. . . . At any rate come here on visits, and if they quarrel it will do Clithy a world of good. His nurses give him too much sense of his own importance."

So there was at least this pleasant thing for them to look forward to, even though Lucy's eyes were wet with tears at leaving Iraku. Engledene Lodge as well as Church Farm would be open to them. Sibyl, more ambitious than ever of cutting a dash, playing a part in modern history, rivalling Lady Feenix, revenging herself for snubs by the Brinsley clan, lived much in London and gave up Engledene to the quiet bringing-up of her only child. When she went down there it was to rest and repair her beauty, to transact humdrum estate business with Maurice Brentham. Except for the autumn shooting parties she entertained very little at Engledene. It was in Scotland and above all in London that she played the lavish hostess and sought to undermine Cabinets and bring a new recruit to the Opposition.

She was now thirty-four, and when animated only looked twenty-six. Rumour had assigned her several love affairs, which out of England — on the Riviera, at Paris, at Rome — were said to have been carried to the borders of indiscretion. It had even been announced that "a marriage had been arranged and would shortly take place," etc., between Lady Silchester and Sir Elijah Tooley — but the announcement had been promptly contradicted, and a month after occurred the first resounding crack in the Tooley edifice. . . .

It was curious how her personality projected itself across five thousand miles of land and sea into Equatorial Africa; so that Lucy and perhaps Roger should both have been thinking about her as they were preparing to leave their home in this secluded region. Lucy thought of Sibyl pleasantly as of one she no longer feared because she never desired to cross her

path as a rival, or contest her superiority. Sibyl would offer her a temporary home in her home country where her children could be riotously happy, and where Roger — even — might be tempted to join her for a few months before resuming his strenuous life as a conqueror of the wilderness. Roger had held out this hope to alleviate the sadness of their approaching separation.

He was to accompany his wife and sister as far as Burungi; after which he must return to the Iraku Hills to take full advantage of the dry-season months for great projected developments of the planting and mining industries. From Burungi, now quite an important centre of traffic, whence well-made roads proceed coastwards, with rest-houses every twenty miles, Lucy and Maud and the precious children would be escorted to the coast port of their embarkation by the two German sergeants, whose service Brentham has taken over from the Stotts. Their journey might be broken by a few days' rest at Hangodi in the Nguru country. Maud would like to see the scene of the tragedy and of Lucy's induction into African life. Lucy would like to pay a visit of sentiment to John Baines's grave and to live over again in a sense of contrite reminiscence her brief experiences as a missionary's wife. She wants to put herself back in time to where the outlook seemed hopeless, and realize the wide horizon of happiness which now seems open before her.

So — an hour late, with all these last thoughts, musing reflections and leave-takings — Halima is howling with grief because she must remain behind — the caravan starts on its first day's march. Lucy from delicacy of constitution is unable to ride much, so she travels in a machila with her baby. Maud bestrides a Maskat donkey and hopes when she returns they will by that time have got horses safely through the tsetse belt, into interior transport . . . " you have so little initia-

tive on a donkey, it will never do anything unconventional." Ambrose being thought too young to ride a donkey is handed over to his special guardian and chum, a tall Manyamwezi porter who hoists him on to his broad shoulders. From this elevation of six feet he surveys the landscape as the *safari* swings along. Some German friend had given him the previous Christmas a tin trumpet, and with blasts of this and shouts of glee he hails the sight of game standing at gaze in the distance.

This would have annoyed any sportsman of the caravan had they been bent on killing for the pot or the trophy; but his father lets him do this unrebuked. He is not intending to transgress his own by-laws about game preservation, and the caravan in these bountiful days has its food supply ensured from station to station. Still Roger reflects musingly as he rides up hill and down hill through the breadth of the Happy Valley and up to the low ridge and water-partings which mark its limit and the commencement of the long descent through Irangi, that in one respect the glamour of the Happy Valley has already withered under the practical need for developing its resources. Though there has been no deliberate big-game slaughter in hecatombs as on the British side of the frontier, the Grant's gazelles, the hartebeests and tsesébes, the elands, zebra, and mpala are never to be seen now grazing near the road. They are retreating every year farther into the unprofitable wastes away from the well-beaten tracks, noisy with the coming and going of carriers, soldiers, native traders, or ivory hunters. These last, under some degree of control, are even being encouraged to pursue the elephants into the recesses of the hills and forests of the north; not only to bring down as much ivory as possible, to sell, but because the elephant has met civilization too abruptly. He has contemptuously knocked down the laboriously erected

telegraph posts, and has snapped and tangled-up the copper wire. This in its derelict condition is too sore a temptation to the native accustomed to regard copper wire as a decorative article of the highest value . . . so many cubits of copper wire would buy a wife. So an edict has gone forth which Roger himself could not protest against, that between Burungi and Kondoa any one, native or European, may kill as many elephants as he pleases. The native herdsmen, again, whom they pass on the road lazily minding the cattle, sheep and goats, are no longer in the state of Paradisiac nudity that characterized them on that first journey of Roger and Lucy down the Happy Valley. No one has remonstrated with them on their nakedness: a hint from Dame Fashion has been enough. The white men and the white men's black followers have been clothed, so they too must wear old uniforms, old coats, old trousers, something in the way of frowsy coverings of their bronze bodies.

The vulgarization of Africa has begun. Never again will there be seen in this region a condition of unspoilt Nature as it first showed itself to the Brenthams. But as a set-off Roger draws Lucy's attention to the telegraph line in course of re-erection, after the rude elephantine protests. It is proceeding to a great German military post, but a branch will presently be carried to Iraku — almost as soon as she is back in Berkshire — and *then* he and she will be in close touch. It will be possible, at a cost of a few pounds, to telegraph to one another and receive the answer in a day — two days at most.

It is four years since the Brenthams saw Burungi, for Roger's journeys, meantime, have ranged farther and farther afield towards the mysterious — still mysterious — region between the Happy Valley and the shores of the Victoria Nyanza. Even then, when Roger rode there to meet his wife and Maud on their

journey inland — Maud's first introduction to Real Africa — the desolate Burungi of 1888 was no longer recognizable, with its wilderness of thorn bushes and baobabs on which gorged vultures were perching, its lurking lions and hyenas, as the evening darkened, its flitting, furtive, thievish Wagogo, the ruined station of the Stotts, and no other visible sign of habitation. Even four years ago, though the vultures were still there, it was to feed on the offal of a well-supplied market-place, the thorn bushes had been burnt for firewood or cut up for fences, and a corrugated iron hut on the Stotts' site, though villainously hot in sunshine, provided shelter and security for stores. Now there were brick houses and a number of grass huts on the Mission enclosure near the river. There were half-finished Government buildings in course of erection and many tents for the accommodation of a staff of military officials and constantly saluting white civilians. A number of clothed Wagogo, looking singularly mean in their garments — though without them they were lithe and graceful savages — were, under the raucous directions of a white engineer-sergeant, laying down a light Decauville railway.

All these activities had not for the time being made Burungi less ugly, and Roger hated the sight of the place. After a long conference with the two civil-spoken German sergeants, who a year previously had been truly thankful to exchange the military career for employment under his Company, he went through the agony of good-bye — an agony he would not protract by spending the night in this noisy, discomfortable place. He compressed his embraces of wife and children — the latter mystified and yowling with the dim realization of bereavement — his wringing of Maud's hands, his directions to telegraph at every opportunity till they got on board, and hang the cost — into two hours; after which, though only two more

hours of daylight remained, he rode away, back to their camp of the previous night: knowing that further lingering might end in his deciding to accompany these two dear women and prattling babes all the way to the coast and perhaps all the way to England.

And it was essential to their future welfare that he should stay where he was and not claim a holiday till certain results had been achieved and certain proofs of easily exploited wealth had been obtained.

But it was a melancholy Roger who, six days afterwards, rode back into the lovely amphitheatre in the Iraku hills where he had made his home. His Maskat donkey showed signs of having being hard ridden; his carriers averred that Master, ordinarily so considerate of their fatigue, so jolly on the line of march, had spurred them on remorselessly, had seemed to pass wakeful nights and had eaten his camp meals with poor appetite. Roger himself felt a few more partings like this would make his earthly life unbearable. Oh that there *were* some truth in the silly hymn chorus that the Stotts delighted in making their pupils sing: "Here we meet to *part no more, part* no more, *part* no more!" He should have been firm with Lucy and bade her stay till he himself was ready to go. And yet when *would* he be ready to go, with Phantom Fortune always beckoning yet never disclosing the final hoard?

There was something in Lucy's face which restrained him from insisting that she should stay. Dr. Wiese had hinted at a growing anæmia which should be checked. Her dominating feeling was a fear that she might lose the precious children born to her here in the wilderness and be forgotten by those she had left behind. He must not take the thing too tragically. If Hildebrandt continued to get these satisfactory assays and could trace the gold-bearing reef a sufficient distance towards the western limit of the Concession; or if on the other hand he could find the matrix of the

diamonds, and not merely these minute brilliants in the gravel of the mountain streams, their main doubts and difficulties would be relieved and he could depart for a holiday at home.

The return to his house was some alleviation of his bereavement. It was so associated with the presence of wife and sister and of his babies. The afternoon sun was behind him; it would soon drop below the blue mountain wall which was a rampart of protection to the site he had chosen for his European settlement. How often he and Lucy had stood here in blue shadow and looked towards the sun-flooded east beyond the shade of the escarpment, towards the Happy Valley! This was just such a close to the day as they had loved to witness three hundred days out of the three hundred and sixty-five of the year. To the north stretched the lake of cobalt blue, with its irregular blush-tinted rim of flamingo hosts. South-east of the lake, beyond lush swamps and green plantations, were the Umbugwe villages and the Stotts' large station — little points, clusters, and pencils of brown and white. The whitest speck was the Stotts' new Chapel. He had been present at its opening ceremony a month ago — to gratify Mrs. Stott. Beyond lake and villages were the gathering masses of mighty mountains, ending north-eastwards in the snow-tipped pyramid of Meru and — on this clear evening — in the supernatural snowy dome of Kibô. What a prospect! And yet he would willingly exchange for it the view over southern Berkshire from the down of Farleigh Wallop.

He entered his house. The presence of Lucy and Maud seemed as if it must be material, not merely spiritual. He looked into their rooms. They had been considerately tidied before they left, and showed little sign of packing up and departure. Lucy was a good house-wife, he reflected, and she probably judged that in her absence he might want to entertain guests,

colleagues come on business, Government officials. So that her room and his sister's were ready prepared for occupation. The nursery was a little more desolate. The toys had been given away to Halima's children. If ever Ambrose and Sibyl came back — and how unlikely that they would! — they would have grown far beyond the love of toys. Maud had left most of her songs on the top of the piano. She could get newer ones in England. The vases were filled with fresh flowers from bush and garden. Halima had put them there, faithful to her mistress's directions. . . .

Halima now called him to his tea, on the verandah. The table was laid with all the care that Lucy was wont to bestow on it. Andrade the cook had baked a nice cake and even attempted something resembling a muffin — a kind of compromise between a muffin and a tea cake, due to a confounding of Maud's instructions. Roger's eyes filled with tears. Halima, departing with a brass tray, answered with two loud sobs in her facile grief. Yet a few years before she had been ready to abandon her mistress in distress when she was stranded in Mr. Callaway's unsavoury depôt at Unguja. His eyes followed her portly form, magnificently swathed in red Indian cottons, with tolerant good will. There was a good deal of the humbug about all these black people, but it was kindly humbug. He was grateful for this comprehension of his sorrow, for this effort to carry out his wife's instructions that the comforts and little elegancies of their home should be continued after her absence.

Then the tame Crowned cranes came below the verandah to be fed with bread and cake as Maud had encouraged them to do. His black-and-tan English terrier, confined for safety in the cook's quarters during his absence, had been released and now came tearing up the steps and rushing along the verandah till it was in contact with his lowered hand, volleying forth a long

succession of eager barks of joy and whimpers of hysterical distress and relief at Master's absence and return. . . .

In the evening after dinner Wiese, Hildebrandt and Riemer (Plantation Manager) came up to pay their respects to the Herr Direktor and give him an informal report of all that had occurred during his absence. They tactfully said little about his bereavement, though Hildebrandt heaved some theatrical sighs at the sight of Maud's music on the piano. But they had much to say in German and English that was interesting and encouraging. So they sat up late into the night talking and discussing. Andrade sent them up an impromptu supper, wine and beer were drunk in the moderation imposed by their then rarity — owing to transport difficulties — and when they finally departed at one in the morning, under the firmament of blazing stars, with lemon-yellow lanterns to light their path back to their respective quarters, the grass-widower betook himself to his couch in a more resigned frame of mind. There would be great doings, great strokes to hew out fortunes for all of them, within the next few months.

A fortnight afterwards, by swift runner from Kondoa, came a telegraphic message despatched from Saadani:

Arrived here safely. Leave for Unguja to-morrow. God bless you.— LUCY MAUD.

Thereafter followed long day-rides of inspection, an occasional week's absence from home studying possibilities in remote parts of the Concession, holding conferences with the Stotts, laying cases and possibilities of special difficulty before the German officer commanding at Kondoa. His talks with the Stotts were directed to several ends: urging the Stotts to get into

the confidence of all the native tribes — Bantu, Hamitic, Nilotic — of the Concession's area and find out how far their interests might be subserved by the full exploitation of the animal, vegetable and mineral wealth of this patch of East Africa. "Unless we carry the natives with us," he would say, "this enterprise must eventually fail, wither up; because, boast of the climate as we may, the hard manual labour cannot be performed by white men: we must fall back on the native. Now half the men-natives in these parts are picturesque to look at, graceful figure and all that; but they shirk hard work. They prefer to loll about in the sun or to run after women. Can't you put some ambition into 'em? Teach them something besides these rotten hymns and prayers that are meaningless to them?"

"But we do," said Mrs. Stott. "You haven't looked over our school for two years, I believe. You seem to have got hymn-singing on the brain. Our hymns translated by us are *not* rubbish and the natives enjoy singing them. . . ."

"I don't doubt they do, though I don't see what use it is. Neither they nor the prayers prevent the Almighty from sending the flights of locusts. . . . Or rather these appeals and this excessive praise do not stimulate the Divine power to do *something* to abate Africa's myriad plagues. It is always poor Man — and most of all, poor *White* man — who has to work his brain and body to exhaustion to set right what Nature perversely sets wrong. Here am I, trying to abate the grasshopper plague in our tobacco plantations by encouraging the domestication of the Crowned crane. Yet the natives won't take any interest in this idea, though the Crowned cranes feed themselves and have charming manners. Can't you push this matter in your schools? Couldn't you preach a sermon on the uses of the Crowned crane?"

On another occasion he put a further difficulty before the Ewart Stotts. "Look here! I'm going to take you again into my confidence. I want you to find me an assistant, some one of your own kin in Australia who would come out here at short notice on an agreement for three years — I even want two men, one of them versed in shorthand and typewriting who could be my secretary. I don't know any one in England who isn't either a rotter or a potential rotter, or hasn't got a job already. There's my brother Geoffrey, but he's a Commander now in the Navy, getting on fine, and simply wouldn't think of chucking the service to come here. My other brother is well suited as a land-agent. I want something Australian, some one as like you two as possible. I don't mind a moderate amount of religion, as long as it doesn't waste their time on week-days, and they can't be too teetotal for my liking. No Whisky-drinker need apply."

"Why, I believe we know of the very two, at any rate of the principal one," said Mrs. Stott: "My nephew Phil Ewart. I haven't seen him since he was a baby, but my brother's wife writes to me now and again and says he's doing very well on a big sheep run in Queensland. . . ."

"Well then, look here: let's draft a cablegram that I can send off from the coast. I'll guarantee him a year's salary and, if he turns out satisfactory, a three years' agreement — £500 a year. He can choose any likely young fellow . . . good character . . . abstainer . . . serve as clerk . . . £200 a year commence . . . take steamer Australia-Durban, and German steamer Durban-Saadani, and so on, up-country. If I get 'em here by November I can give 'em three months' trial before I set out for home. . . . *Must* take a holiday next year and bring my wife out afterwards. Don't like to leave this business without a Britisher in it to watch my interests, don't you know.

and advise me how things are going while I am away."

So they arranged the matter between them. Then Mrs. Stott said: "I've a funny proposition to make. A week ago I received a letter from Ann Jamblin that was . . . at Hangodi. . . . Ann Anderson she is now. She saw Lucy there five weeks ago and was much touched at her calling on them. Says she took a special fancy to your dear, sweet, pretty children. Her own little girl is very ailing. Well, now she goes on to say old Mrs. Doland, who was a great supporter of their Mission, has died and only left the East African Mission £5,000. For this and other reasons the Mission thinks of giving up Hangodi, as it is quite an isolated station now, and all their others are in the British Sphere. . . . Well, to put it quite plain, as you're impatient to be gone — oh, *I* know by the way you're tapping your gaiters — how would it be if your Concession or you or some one advanced our Mission £150 for out-of-pocket expenses — so as to move quickly, don't you know? And we sent word to Ann and her husband to join us as soon as they had definite authority to evacuate Hangodi. The German Government, I believe, are going to buy the station. If we got Ann and her husband up here the couple of them would strengthen our hands mightily and then we could give some of that worldly instruction you're so anxious about. Or make it up in some way of help. Strengthen the British element here. For although I don't hold with your views about Providence one little bit, and believe the World was made in six days and am surprised every now and again that you aren't struck down for your audacity, not to say blasphemy, yet something tells me you and we are really working for the same Divine ends. . . ."

Roger said the matter should certainly have his attention. (Before he left for England the follow-

ing Spring Ann and Eb were members of the Stott Mission, and the Stotts were able to open another station and school in the Iraku country.)

The months flew by through autumn, winter and spring. Roger established a stud farm in the Happy Valley where he could locate a captured dozen of zebra and interbreed with Maska donkeys . . . perhaps a manageable, large-bodied zebra-mule might solve some of their transport difficulties in the regions of the tse-tse fly. He introduced shorthorn cattle from South Africa to mingle with the native oxen and improve the milk supply. He imported from Natal six Basuto ponies, two stallions and four mares. He ordered three safety bicycles — the great new invention or combination of inventions. He and his German engineers, reinforced by a clever Swiss sent out by the German directorate, gave special consideration to the waterfalls of Iraku, to harness them to turbines and produce electric light. This power would feed electric dynamos when the progress of the railway construction enabled such heavy things to reach the Happy Valley. They laid out great coffee plantations and experimented in tea and quinine. It was hoped the natives might take up all these cultures in time, on their own account, as they had done that of cacao on the Gold Coast and in the German Cameroons.

The day for his departure in the early spring came ever nearer and nearer. The two Australians arrived, went down with fever, recovered and eventually proved the right stuff, especially young Philip Ewart. Mrs. Stott said she would see he did not get into mischief while the Director was absent in England. She would also give an eye to the Brenthams' house and the doings of Andrade and Halima as caretakers.

There was therefore little cause for anxiety on Roger's part as he made his preparations for a six-months' absence, save the rumoured doings of a cer-

tain Stolzenberg, a mysterious German hunter who, coming from the British Sphere, had established himself near the north-west escarpment of Lake Manyara, apparently on the border of the Happy Valley Concession (Glücklichesthals Konzession).

CHAPTER XIX

TROUBLE WITH STOLZENBERG

IN those days — to parody a line of Holy Writ — it might be said, "To every man, a crater or two"; if you were referring to the wilderness which lay between Kilimanjaro and the southern Rift Valleys, and to the strange adventurers who in the 'nineties ranged up and down the East African interior between Baringo on the north and the Happy Valley on the south, over a region of elevated steppe land, isolated mountains of immense height, and extinct volcanoes. Some of these lawless men were accumulating considerable wealth in ivory, sheep and cattle. They wanted fortresses in which to live and store their plunder, or the spoil of their chase, the elephant tusks, the rhino horns, the lion and leopard skins, the black and white mantles of the long-haired colobus monkeys, the ostrich plumes; even the roughly-cured skins of the rosy flamingoes which were becoming an article of great demand in the plumage trade. For this purpose the large and small craters of presumably extinct volcanoes were ready to hand; as though Nature had anticipated their wants. Most of these were surrounded on the inside by the nearly continuous, circular wall of the crater, only broken down at one point where the lava or nowadays a stream of water (the overflow of a little crater lake) issued from the crater floor. Here with piled stones it was easy to restrict the gap and hold the entrance against any savage enemy without artillery. These defences were, of course, prepared against the Masai and not with any idea of defying a White Government,

whose advent at that time seemed very problematical: at any rate a White Government that would interfere to protect the natives, to obstruct elephant killing, or regulate the movements of cattle between a disease-infected area and one that still possessed uninfected flocks and herds.

It was to one of these craters — very red in colour — that Roger Brentham rode up at the end of March, 1897, after three days' difficult journey from the south. He halted his little *safari* of armed porters and his four Somali gun-men on a level tableland in front of the gap in the crater walls; a gap cleverly closed by a huge door of yew planks and a bridge of yew trunks thrown over the issuing brook, with stones piled on top to a height of twenty feet. There were obvious indications that the walls and woodwork were loopholed for gun-fire. He called several times loudly in Swahili and German to arouse an answer and rapped on the cumbrous door.

Presently a smaller door within the great one opened and there emerged a sullen-looking negro giant, probably a Makua from the south. [Such offer themselves for service in Unguja.] "Unatakáje?" he asked in Swahili. "I want to see your Bwana — I do not know his 'native' name," said Brentham, "but just take this 'karata' to him and he will read my name; and say I wish to see him. Meantime I will make a camp here."

The Makua doorkeeper or watchman returned within, and possibly an hour passed before anything further happened, during which Brentham had his tent erected, and arranged for his men — they were travelling very light — to make their sleeping-places around it.

The small door was again reopened and there stepped out a remarkable-looking man of over six feet, with enormous recurved moustaches, a sombrero hat, jack-boots and a general swashbuckling air and a visible re-

volver in the broad belt that held up his breeches. He walked slowly towards Roger who advanced to meet him.

"Did you come to see me?" he asked in English.

"I did," said Roger; "that is, if your name is Stolzenberg?"

"It is . . . for to-day — at any rate. Well: here I am. You come to tell me 'it is Easter Sunday, and Christ Is Risen,' like the Russians do?"

"Why, *is* it Easter Sunday? Dear me! I had no idea. If so, I might have chosen another time. Still, as I *am* here and as *you* are here — and I fancy you are often absent? — I should be obliged if we could have a talk, come to an understanding, don't you know?" (There was no answering friendliness in the fierce face that looked into his, the face of a perfectly ruthless man, eyes with bloodshot whites, wide mouth with pale flaccid lips, showing strong tobacco-stained teeth, prominent cheek bones, lowering brows, a massive jaw, and here and there an old duelling scar.

"An unnerstanding?" he said sneeringly. "What about? *I* unnerstand you. I know who you are, now I see your card. You are Captain Brentham. Once you were Consul . . . at . . . Unguja. Then you run away with missionary's wife — and — you are . . . no more Consul. You do somesing shocking, *nicht wahr?* It is so easy to shock your Gover'ment — and now von Wissmann — that Morphinsäufer — he gif you a Concession. An' I suppose you come now to say I trespass on your Concession? Very well then, I *do,* an' I don' care a damn for you or for any Gover'ment you like to name. I make this my home six, seven years ago and no one come to turn me out now, unless they fight me first. . . ."

"I haven't come to turn you out," said Roger. Stolzenberg laughs noisily and contemptuously. . . . "It's not my business to do so. I have come with a

very small following to make your acquaintance, to find out for myself what you were like and to see whether it was possible to deal with you . . ." (As he is talking he sees that through the open doorway of the stronghold there are issuing a large number of armed black men, dressed like the coast people — perhaps a hundred), " to deal with you as one white man might deal with another. But before I can even put our case — our Concession's case — before you, you commence by insulting me and making a lying statement about my wife — and you probably now intend threatening me by an attack with your Askari [1] — who I see are gathering up behind you."

" These men," said Stolzenberg, glancing round at them and shouting an order to them to be seated, " are only there to make sure. You Britishers are always up to some trick. I thought just to show you I stand no nonsense. As to what I say . . . a-bout Meeses . . . Brentham, I . . . only . . . say . . . what your . . . own country-men say on coast. But let that pass. What is this unnerstanding you propose to me — a Partnership? Well, I am open to a bargain. What is it to be? What terms do you offer? "

" I haven't come here to discuss any such thing. I came to say this. As you ask the question, this extraordinary place — I suppose it is the crater of a volcano? — does not lie within our limits. You are not trespassing on our property. But for the past nine months or so we have had many complaints about you or about your men. You raid the natives, you take the Masai cattle and apparently drive them into this stronghold. You even kidnap the Iraku women. . . ."

" I do *not* kidnap. . . . They come here of their own pleasure . . . they are free to go if they like. But they like my men much better than their own husbands who cannot gif them closs or beads. . . ."

[1] Soldiers.

"And finally," continued Roger, almost choking with the effort to speak in a level voice and not send a fist smashing into the large face that bends over his so threateningly, "finally, you drove away by force two of our prospecting parties at the north end of the Lake and . . ."

"Those men," shouted Stolzenberg . . . "they . . . they come just to spy out my defences . . . but look here. You and I are big fools — p'raps I am bigger fool than you. . . . I lose my temper first, I say things a-bout a la-dy which perhaps are not true. . . . I apologize. . . . Nutting they say on the coast *is* true! Look at the lies they tell about me!" (a boisterous laugh). "They say at Mombasa I am biggest blaggard unhung. That is — what you say? ex-agger-a-ted? And look at the lies Bri-tish missionaries tell about my friend, Doctor Peters. It is that make me so angry just now. German Gover'ment belief these lies and send my good friend away. And then there is a fine Englishman I know, a nobleman in your country, a Sir — Sir Wil-low-by Pat-terne. You would hardly belief the things they say a-bout him — always be-hind his back. . . ."

"So you know Willowby Patterne," said Roger (greatly interested).

"I haf seen him once or twice," replied Stolzenberg, becoming suspicious. "But you do not come here, I sup-pose, to talk about him? You come to make my acquaintance. Well: you haf made it. Now you leaf me alone and I will leaf you alone. I . . . what you say? I 'will not return your call'? My quarrel with the Māsai is not *your* business. I haf — what do we say? I haf 'vendetta' against the Māsai. When I first come out to East Africa on my own business I fit out a *safari* and travel to Kenya to buy ivory. I do no harm to Māsai, but they attack my camp, they kill a young German man with me, my *very great* friend;

they kill most of my men — and see! They try to kill me" (pulls up shirt and shows long scar over ribs on left side), "and they kill my dogs. Only when they see Kikuyu coming down in large war party do they leaf off stabbing and go away with most of my trade goods. The Kikuyu carry me up to their village and save my life — I haf always been good friend to Kikuyu since.— You ask them! Well now, I get my own back. Whenever I see Māsai now, I shoot. I put fear of death into them. . . ."

"This is an interesting bit of biography," said Brentham, "but I thought those lawless days were gone by. I haven't heard the Masai version of your story. Perhaps they had some excuse. At any rate, they were not the same clan as the Masai round here, friends of mine for years; and you've no right to make war on them. Outside our concession, that's not *my* affair. Your Government ——"

"Do not say *my* Gover'ment," roared Stolzenberg. "It is not mine. I do not ask for it! I am my own gover'ment. I was in these countries before ever came any German or any British Gover'ment."

"Well then, the Government of this region, the Government that has got the most right to govern . . . I say — No! you *must* hear me out before I go — what you may do outside our concession is between you and them. But if after this warning you interfere with our people, the people inside this Concession I am managing, and in which I'm a magistrate, you'll run up against *me,* and I shall shoot you at sight like you do the Masai. . . ."

"All right! Haf a drink before you go?"

"No, I won't," said Roger. And wheeling round on his listening men, he shouted: "Pigeni kambi. Maneno yamekwisha. Twende zetu." Then, so that his leave-taking might lose none of its abruptness, he strode to where his Maskat donkey was tethered, re-

leased it, jumped into the saddle, and rode slowly away till he was out of sight, below the space of level ground. There he waited till his men had rejoined him with their light loads. The first to arrive were the four Somali gun-men. They had long since learnt to speak Swahili and they said, laughing, in relief that the palaver had ended without recourse to firearms: "Ulimshinda na maneno, Bwana mkubwa, ulimshinda, yule Mdachi. Walakini, ukiondoka, akasema watu wake. 'Simchuki, yule Mwingrezi. Mwanaume.'" [1]

Roger rode away musing from this encounter, or rather rode and walked over an exceedingly rough country with scarcely a native path or sign of habitation, a country depopulated doubtless by former wars and raids of tribe on tribe: for it was well watered.

The tall clumps of Euphorbias gave the red landscape a sinister look, for their articulated branches looked like a conjunction of gigantic scorpions, bodies meeting together and stinging tails erected in the air; the fleshy-leaved aloes of deep bottle-green sent up blood-red stalks of blood-red tubular flowers; on the higher ground there were many rust-red or red-lead-coloured "red-hot pokers"—what the initiated call Kniphofias. The country somehow suggested blood and iron; for the old and faded Euphorbias might have been cut out of rusty metal, and iron ore was so obviously permeating the rocks.

He mused on the violence to which Africa always seemed a prey. The reign of law in East Africa in both the British and German spheres seemed to be preceded by the reign of the outlaws. He knew enough as a traveller and an ex-official, and as a resident in the lands bordering on the British sphere, to be aware that just then the British hinterland was a prey to German

[1] "You conquered him with words, Great Master, you defeated him, that German. But when you left he said to his people: 'I don't hate him, that Englishman. He is a man.'"

and British, Austrian, American, South African and even Goanese-Indian buccaneers, who obeyed no laws or injunctions of the feeble Chartered Company or of the weak young Protectorate Government which followed.

Some of these outlaws had come to East Africa with a voluble Austrian crank and two Russian anarchists who tried to found an impossible Utopia in South Galaland, the Colony of Freiheit — the main principle of which was that the oppressed white people of Central and Eastern Europe were to be free to do as they liked here and take all they wanted, while the natives of East Africa were to be their serfs. The natives of that part of East Africa — the proud Galas — who did not even know a *good* white man when they saw him, or allow him to live — soon settled the hash of the Freiheiters, many of whom (there were three hundred in all) died of malarial fever. The remnant that escaped across the Tana became a scourge of inner East Africa; and a faint flavour of their unscrupulousness still remains. At the time of Roger's musing ride back from Stolzenberg's red Crater-fortress to his home at Magara on the Iraku escarpment there were about a dozen of these pioneers of civilization still remaining in activity. A few had made moderate competencies and had returned to Central Europe to abandon Communism in favour of State and Church, and to make respectable marriages with high-born damsels. The greater devils, the altogether branded-with-the-brand-of-Cain that remained would one by one either enter some company's service, not too scrupulous as to antecedents, or die bloody and terrible deaths. Meantime, they shot enormous numbers of elephants, made themselves chiefs of nomad tribes, started harems of twenty or thirty bought or snatched damsels (who thought the whole episode rather a lark), accumulated great herds of cattle, sheep, goats and Masai donkeys. Later, as

things became more defined, frontiers more precise, laws more clearly formulated and regulations — my own for example — more vexatious, they turned themselves into smugglers and professional lawbreakers. They conveyed out of British into German territory forbidden ivory of female elephants; they brought from the German sphere cattle that might be affected with some germ disease and were therefore forbidden to enter British territory; they disposed of rhinoceros horns that were in excess of the miserly allowance granted to big-game slaughterers; they carried on a brisk slave trade by enrolling hundreds of labourers in German East Africa and conveying them hundreds of miles into British East Africa and disposing of them at a premium to the many associations and enterprises requiring the black man's strong arm and patient labour; and they redressed the balance by raiding unnoticed districts under the British flag and transporting the inhabitants to German East Africa to be enrolled as labourers under military discipline.

A few of them were unmitigated scoundrels, two or three had a maniac's blood-lust for killing beautiful creatures of little use when killed; or delighted in inflicting cruelties on the natives "to show their power." Many a blameless Government or Company's official proceeding up-country has been surprised at the hatred which flamed out at his approach, he guiltless of any unkindness or injustice. One or other of these masterless men were the cause of the treacherous attack on his caravan, or the loss of his life in an ambush which had to be expensively avenged by a military expedition.

Yet if there was the left wing of this Legion of the Damned which drew up at the foot of the gallows, there was the right wing, headed by Sir Willowby Patterne, which remained in touch with good society and even dined, coming and going, at the Administrator's table or with Sir Bennet Molyneux at home. Nothing to

their actual discredit was proved against them. And East Africa was five thousand miles from Mayfair.

Patterne, whose first shooting expedition of 1890–91 had resulted in quite a nice little profit from the ivory it obtained, took up definitely an East African career. He had at first tried to get himself commissioned for the interior of the Chartered Company's territory. But its directors were well-intentioned, shrewd men and his home reputation barred the way. Yet he could not very well — being a Baronet of far-reaching connexions — be denied access to this loosely governed region, whither he came every two or three years. After his first journey and the court cases it aroused at Unguja, he was not such a fool as to continue his savage treatment of his carriers and servants or he would soon have been unable to recruit a caravan. On the contrary he paid well and gave a liberal food allowance, and within limits his enforcement of a rather Prussian discipline exacted the respect of the Negro, who appreciates arbitrary power if it is not accompanied by meanness in money matters. His reckless slaughter of game made him even popular with his expeditions because it gave the men a surfeit of meat, and trophies to turn into amulets.

Patterne at last became tolerated as an inevitable concomitant of the march of civilization, and acquired citizenship in British East Africa by staking out a vague "concession" near the north-west corner of the Kilimanjaro slopes on the edge of the German frontier. It was in this way and in this neighbourhood that he got to know Adolf Stolzenberg, whom he helped in his raids against the Masai; less by direct participation than by furnishing him with arms and ammunition and by disposing of his captured cattle.

"What do you know about this curious personage, Stolzenberg?" asked Roger of his two friends, Hilde-

brandt and Wiese, when he had returned to Magara from his visit to the Red Crater.

"Only what we hear people say," replied Hildebrandt. "Some say he is just a Sous African German who do some bad sing in Sous Africa and com up here ten, twelf year ago to join the Denhardts. Ozzers say he com from Germany long before, wiz Dr. Fischer, and zat he was natural son of our old Emperor Wilhelm One. First, Emperor put him in army, and several times pay his debts, and zen when he kill anozzer officer in duel he pack him off to Africa and say, 'Never let me see your face again.' But p'raps zat is only story invented by ze man himself. Somtimes I sink our Government use him in som way. I dare say your Government do ze same by zis ozzer man you hate so, Vill-o-bee Patterne. What a fonny name! Your English names are somtimes more fonny zan ours!"

The German Commandant, consulted by Roger (who in April, 1897, was on his way to the coast after having made everything safe behind him), was rather non-committal about Stolzenberg. The conversation was in German, punctuated with phrases of Swahili, on the part of the Commandant, who was proud of having acquired a smattering of this African tongue. He was rather non-committal about the denizen of the Red Crater. He was a "derben Kerl" . . . "Simba, yule, kabisa," the terror of the Masai. He kept the Masai occupied in that quarter while the Germans tackled the Wa-hehe on the south. He must be given some latitude . . . the Commandant would see he did not impinge on the Concession . . . perhaps he might be persuaded to take command of a large irregular force against the Wa-hehe. . . .

"'*Divide et impera*,' sehen Sie? Ein glas Rhein-

wein, nicht so? Und Soda? Ein lang-trinken in der Englische phrase. . . ."

It seemed incongruous that this scene — the rather stiff German major, in strict, white, military uniform and an encumbering sword, a black sentry, not far away, walking with a plap, plap, plap of his bare feet up and down the prescribed number of paces; a plainly furnished, white-washed room in a square fort with pretentious crenellations along its high white walls; the oleograph portrait of Kaiser Wilhelm II; the camp table, the Rhine wine in long-necked bottles, the enamelled iron tumblers and the soda siphons; and the click of a typewriter in the next apartment — should come up before his mental vision as he sat with Lucy and Maud and the Schräder partners on a balcony in the Strand, waiting for Queen Victoria to pass to her Jubilee thanksgiving at St. Paul's! Why should he think of Adolf Stolzenberg then?

He was but part of the African nightmare which he would fain roll up and forget. A few weeks of England had put Africa's nose out of joint. To work for the redemption of a tiny portion of German Africa when such gigantic developments of British Africa were dawning in the imagination of far-seeing men, or when an evolution still more important was taking place in his own land, in the Far East, in America. . . .

What was it that brought back the Red Crater to his mind, the sinister face and powerful figure of Stolzenberg; or the German Commandant in the fort at Kondoa? Whose was the thin, aquiline, insolent face with its riotus smile that held his gaze across the narrow Strand, the face of a tall man in ultra-fashionable cut of clothes, standing up amid a bower of Gaiety girls with four or five extra-smart young City men — stockbrokers, no doubt, Company promoters, or the solicitors of Company promoters —? It was Willowby Patterne

he had been staring at for several minutes; and Sir Willowby was flicking a greeting to him with the manicured hand which had drawn the trigger on so many lovely beasts, or had lifted the Kiboko with such a cunning twist to lay its lash on the naked skin of some defaulting native porter. . . .

He had to concentrate his thoughts before he replied to the greeting with a grave bow — had to remember that he had once played semi-host to this man at a Scotch shooting lodge; hated him mostly on hearsay unproved evidence, and chiefly on apprehension as to future maleficence, rather than on positive wrongs to himself.

Then he gave his consideration once more to the passing pageant.

Thrum . . . thrum . . . thrum . . . thrum . . . in between the bursts of military music went the steady marching of the Imperial troops. There was the pick of the regiments of the British line; there were samples of Indian infantry — bearded Sikhs, grinning Gurkhas, handsome Panjabis — Surely that was young Pearsall-Smith at the head of one of these detachments? He had heard of his distinguishing himself in the Nyasaland wars against the Arabs — and he winced to think he had no part in this ceremonial, he could point of late to no service to the Crown and Empire — was it his fault? If he had gone to Norway or to South America, could he have achieved anything that might have brought him into the procession of to-day? What splendid Indian cavalry. That Indian prince leading them had once given him some tiger shooting when he was a young A.D.C. to Sir Griffith Gaunt. Ah! Here was Africa in the procession — Hausas from Nigeria, Sudanese from Egypt; these bronzed, well-seated, rather insolent-looking white men were mounted police from the Cape, from Bechuanaland, from Natal.

These gaudy zouave uniforms and Christy minstrels' faces were a contingent from the West Indian regiments that had figured in so many West African wars. And now came well-set-up Turkish police from Cyprus, well-drilled Chinese police from Hong Kong; even solemn-looking Dyaks from Borneo, who were believed to have given up head-hunting in favour of constabulary work at the Bornean ports.

And carriages containing permanent officials — he thought he recognized Sir Bennet Molyneux in one, possibly attached to the person of some foreign prince, some German or Russian Grand Duke. And Ministers of State saluted by the happy crowd with good-humoured cheers and a few serio-comic groans. That one who aroused such an outburst of cheering was the great Choselwhit, Josiah Choselwhit, Secretary of State for the Colonies, in Windsor uniform with the customary eyeglass. His hosts, the Schräders, joined lustily in the hurrahs, as did the City men opposite; Choselwhit was supposed to have brought grist to the City mills and to be the mainstay of the British Empire in which Germans as well as British made such millions of money. . . .

And . . . and . . . and . . . At last, after many preliminary princes and princesses, Queen Victoria herself; a little figure swathed in much black clothing but with filmy white around the rosy face and yellow-white hair. . . . She progressed very slowly — so it seemed to Roger — past their windows. The Schräder brothers positively brayed their international loyalty, so that their voices were even heard by her above the deafening clamour. She turned her somewhat haughty profile and clear blue eyes towards their balcony with its flamboyant draperies and symbols, as if she searched for some face she knew to whom she might address a smile of acknowledgment; but finding none, turned her gaze to the Gaiety girls and the shouting young men

who had invited Patterne as their guest. To these pretty actresses, showing real emotion, she did address a royal smile, which caused one of them to give way to real tears. Then Roger found himself gazing at the back of her bonnet with its white ostrich plume, illogically disappointed that there had been no smile for him, he who would have served her so gladly had her ministers let him.

The Queen-ant of an unusually large ant-hill on this little ball of rock and water having gone on her way to thank the Master Spirit of the Universe for a few additional years of life and power to do good — the while no doubt that Master Spirit, despite Its Unlimited Intelligence, was vexed and preoccupied at the way things were going in the constellation of Orion — a million times larger than the whole solar system; or at the accelerated currents of star-dust in the Milky Way, or the slow progress towards forming a cluster of sixty giant worlds made by the Nebula of Andromeda: the Schräder partners were dispensing very elegant hospitality in the room behind the two windows they had taken at an Illustrated Newspaper Office in the Strand. They were essentially practical men, being German, with a Jewish quarter-strain and a French education. They could have entertained Roger and his wife and sister; a great Singer — who could not "place" Roger and therefore was cold to him; a great Actress rather past her prime; a great Essayist whose mental scope was limited by Oxford and the Athenæum: and various other guests of intellectuality and distinction: they could have entertained their friends and acquaintance in the Piccadilly house of one of them and the Grosvenor Gardens house of another; or they could have thrown open their splendid City offices for the same purpose; but the view of the whole procession and especially of the Queen would not have been so

near, so concentrated, as from windows on the first floor of the Strand at its narrowest. So in fixing up their plans two months beforehand it was here they were playing the lavish host.

The collation was of the most exquisite; the wines of the finest quality imparting the most insidious intoxication, so that you thought you were only being your natural self, though you put your elbows on the table and wondered that you had never hitherto been ranked as a great wit. The celebrated singer began to forget her secret grievance that she was not being entertained by Royalty and had not ridden in one of those carriages. She consoled herself by the assurance she would be at the Naval Review and the Garden Party and probably most of her fellow-guests would not. And then after all, if you did stoop to City entertainers, you could not do much better than the Schräders, unless it were the Rothschilds. Baron Schräder was the head of the family, and he had been made a Baron by Napoleon III, which was much more *chic* than a German title given by a petty German court. The Schräders for several generations had been dilettanti, outside business; musicians of a certain talent; shrewd judges of cinque-cento art; abstruse ornithologists; members of the Zoological Society's Council; of a Jockey Club here and of a Cercle d'Escrime there. But to sustain this life of many facets they required unlimited money; and Roger Brentham just now was promising to become one of their most remarkable money-spinners. Mr. Eugene Schräder was therefore, after one or two elegant fillings and sippings over Royal names, proposing ever so informally his good health, and that of his charming and devoted wife, and . . . and . . . he stammered a little over the characterization of Maud, who was the least genial member of the party and had shown herself a little blunt with the actress past her prime,

who was now descending to whispered confidences of marital ill-treatment. "But our friend, Captain Brentham . . . may I without indiscretion say he should, if he had all that was due to him, have been in the procession to-day as an actor rather than a spectator? Though our party would have lost one of its most interesting guests. . . ." (The Essayist, whose nose has gone very red with the champagne and the Château Yquem, here looks at Roger for the first time with focussed eyes: is it possible that he could have done anything worth notice, outside Oxford and the Athenæum?) "Our friend, Captain Brentham, first led the way of Imperial expansion in East Africa; he is now endeavouring to show us Germans how the wealth of our East African possessions should be developed and brought into the world's markets. Germany was not too proud to enlist the services of any man — or woman" (he bowed to the Actress and Singer) "of ability. To be a German was in some ways to be a world-citizen. If they searched the glorious records of the British Empire they would find them studded with German names. . . . The British Empire of to-day stood grandly open to German enterprise; they would find in return that the German Empire overseas was ready to afford every opportunity to British colonizing and administrative genius. So there would be in German circles no grudging to Captain Brentham of a full meed of praise — from his firm, at any rate — for the truly remarkable discoveries he had made. . . ."

"You mustn't forget the credit due to Hildebrandt and Wiese and several other fellows," interpolated Brentham, desirous of doing the right thing —

"Just so — of your German colleagues: that is as it should be. But that brings me to the climax I was leading up to, rather wordily I fear. Dear friends" (his voice a little tremulous with honest emotion) "let us drink a final toast: *To Anglo-German Co-opera-*

tion; to the great Alliance of our two Nations, founded on affinity of race and language, a common love of Truth, a common devotion to Science, and I might add almost — a common dynasty" . . . (rest lost in clapping).

The toast, however, was drunk somewhat sparingly and absent-mindedly. The Singer, Madame Violante (her married name was Violet Mackintosh), felt dangerously near hiccups (it was the plovers' eggs, she told herself) and she might have to sing to-night! How could she have been so mad? The Actress felt she had said rather too much about her husband to a total stranger, a middle-aged woman who now looked a mere parson's wife.

The Essayist had grown rather sulky because his hosts in this wholly unnecessary speechifying had made no reference to his own contribution to Anglo-German friendship, his *Place of Heine among Modern Poets* and his *Synthesis of Lessing's Dramas.*

Then the party broke up, and the kindly Schräders suggested, as any form of conveyance was totally unprocurable, they should have the hardihood (the gentlemen protecting the ladies) to walk back through the common People — whom the Police had described as uncommon good-natured and just a bit merry — to the Green Park and witness the dear Queen's return to Buckingham Palace.

But when the Jubilee fiss-fass-fuss had abated and before they went to Homburg and Aix, the partners sent for Roger and spoke to him with business-like generosity. He and his staff had made discoveries of value that might be almost called astounding. The capital of the Company would possibly be increased ten-fold — large subscriptions in Germany — exciting immense interest among the best people on this side.

His original syndicate shares had become equivalent to 50,000 shares in the enlarged Company, and as they stood at a pound, why he would be worth, if he realized, £50,000. But, of course, he would not do such a thing till promises had been turned into performances — Meantime, they were prepared to raise his salary to £3,000 a year — he would probably have to entertain German officials considerably — and conclude an agreement for ten years. . . . "But if I have to entertain largely?" he queried, not above making as good a bargain as possible. . . . "My dear Captain Brentham! Don't let *that* stand between us. . . . There shall be an entertainment allowance of five hundred a year. And we hope that that will induce you to take your charming lady back with you, and your sister, Miss Brentham. I assure you the encomiums passed on those ladies by our German friends out there have contributed not a little to. . . ."

"All this is very kind of you. But I don't want to think I alone am being rewarded for discoveries which in some cases were entirely due to. . . ."

"You will find when you go back your German colleagues have not been forgotten in the all-round increase of salaries. . . . And now; go and take a *good* holiday and get well braced up before your return in the autumn. . . ."

Roger took them at their word. He and Lucy, after revelling in the joys of parenthood in Berkshire, went off to spend a month with Sibyl at Glen Sporran. Lucy had long since grown used to Sibyl, so the prospect of the visit caused her no perturbation. She followed Maud's advice as to suitability of outfit and the number of evening frocks and tea-gowns. She was the only member of the party who did not bicycle or play bridge. Sibyl boasted of doing sixty miles a day

without turning a hair; but the Rev. Stacy Bream nearly killed himself trying to emulate her feats of coasting downhill and pedalling uphill.

The Honble. Vicky Masham was there as of yore — a little longer in the tooth (she had got used to Sibyl's nickname by this time, and had forgiven it as Sibyl had helped her to pay her bridge debts) —. She hurt her ankle badly in a bicycle accident and had to lie up. Lucy, the only one at home, sat with her, did fancy work and burbled gently about her African experiences. The Honble. Victoria grew quite interested, regretted that Mrs. Brentham, born as she had been born, without the purple, and her husband not having pursued a British career, could not be brought to the dear Queen's notice. . . . The Queen took the *greatest interest* in Africa. . . .

Lucy, of course, after a few lessons abandoned any attempt to play bridge (people in 1897 debated whether bicycling, bridge, the Bible, or herbaceous borders had brought the greatest happiness to Britain: we, in after life, see it was the bicycle). She was scared by the subterranean forces it aroused and lit up in the angry eyes around her, the fortunes that were involved in the plunge of No Trumps, the awful penalties attendant on a revoke, the fate that hung on a finesse. So she wisely declined to play and talked — or rather listened — to the one who cut out; or if several tables were made up, she dispensed drinks and sweets and a sandwich supper. The Rev. Stacy Bream, vaguely nettled by her rival Christianity, glanced at her once, remembered years ago she had been Sibyl's butt, and inquired of Sibyl "who her people were, what her father was?"

"One of the best farmers in Berkshire," said Sibyl. "Mine is — or was — for I had to buy him up — one of the worst. . . . What was *your* father, by the bye? It never occurred to me to ask you before. . . ."

The Rev. Stacy's father had really been a very pushing Agent for a firm of Decorators and Wall-paper designers: so he replied with a sigh: "A great, *great* traveller, dear lady; a man who loved Colour and Design better than his immortal soul, I fear. . . . It's to you to cut. . . ."

But Sibyl had not confined her Highland house-party to these worn-out fribbles. Bream had his uses. He would be there to assoil a guest who might get shot in the shooting, and so perhaps save the unpleasantness of an inquest; and his stories of people on the fringe of Society were the equivalent and the accompaniment in midnight chat — just before you took your bedroom candle — of pâté-de-foie sandwiches and cherry brandy. Vicky Masham kept you right with Queen Victoria; Lucy was a reminder to her not to make a fool of herself with Roger . . . perhaps also there was a little gratitude in her hard nature for the good a year of Lucy's society had wrought in her little son's health and disposition. But she wanted — more than ever at thirty-six — to be a political woman, to make a difference in the world, hand her name down in history, change or shape history in fact. It had occurred to her, as it did to fifty other mature, handsome, well-placed women of ambition, to marry Cecil Rhodes; but the Jacobzoon Raid and still more the eager rivalry of other ladies, perfectly shameless in their frontal attacks on the Colossus, soon thwarted any such idea . . . reduced it, indeed, to such a ridiculous impossibility that it was only confided to her locked diary. She had fortunately withdrawn her half-promise from Sir Elijah Tooley at the very first hint that there was a crack in his reservoir of wealth. Otherwise — with a couple of millions of his money . . . and he could have had his own suite of apartments, and she would have stopped him waxing his moustaches . . . she might have over-turned her

world. . . . Then there was Count Balánoff, the Russian Ambassador, a widower. . . .

"You know," she said to Roger in one of her many smoking-room tête-à-tête confidences —" he is 'richissime,' and really rather decent, though he does dye his hair. . . . Gold mines in Siberia, turquoise mines in the Caucasus. . . . He seemed quite to *want* to marry me, at one time. . . . Vicky Masham thinks it was the Queen who interposed. If he'd asked me and I'd accepted I should have made myself in no time the most talked-about woman in Europe. I'd have negotiated an alliance with Russia — always an idea of mine — and have paid the Kaiser out for his Kruger telegram — Why *is* it, Roger, there isn't a *rush* to marry me? I've ten thousand a year for life; I'm only thirty-six, which nowadays is equivalent to twenty-six; I've a splendid constitution, my hair's my own and so are my teeth, my figure is perfect. . . . I might be an artist's model for the 'tout ensemble.' . . . And yet . . . (a pause for smoking).

"And it isn't as though the re-marriage of titled women was 'mal vu' at Court any longer. . . . There's Lady Landolphia Birchall. She's going to be married again in the autumn; this time to a 'booky' — for he really is nothing more, though he takes bets with the Prince. And she's turned fifty. But the Queen doesn't seem to mind. . . ."

But to return to the theme from which this digression started. Sibyl had asked four great Imperialists down to Glen Sporran to make Roger's acquaintance: the Honble. Darcy Freebooter, Percy Bracket — Editor of the *Sentinel* — the Right Honble. J. Applebody Bland, and Albert Greystock, grandson of old Lord Bewdly. She would have liked to have captured Mr. Rudyard Kipling, but he had perversely gone to the United States, a region which lay outside Sibyl's calcu-

lations, since we could neither annex it nor protect it. She had even tried to include the great Choselwhit in the company, the mysterious idol before whom and whose non-committal eyeglass so much imperialistic incense was then burnt. But he had answered coldly, in an undistinguished handwriting, that he regretted a previous engagement.

"I don't mind admitting, it's *rather* a snub," she said to her quite indifferent cousin, "and it *vexes* me because he is the coming man. It is *he* we must look to, to lead the Unionist, the Imperial Party; not those effete Brinsleys with their antiquated love of Free Trade and the Church of England. . . . I'm very much 'in' just now with Laura Sawbridge . . . you know, that clever woman-writer and traveller. She says she can turn Chocho *round her little finger.* It was *he* who sent her out to . . . (rest whispered). Well, you see what *that* means? Chocho is lying low, but he means to get even with old Kruger and paint the Transvaal red. . . ."

Whether anything much, except distrust and disgust, resulted from bringing Roger Brentham within the same four walls, into the same shooting parties, bridge contests and bicycling excursions as these distinguished Imperialists, it is hardly worth inquiring. Imperialism is dead, and I, as an old Imperialist, am moribund, and most of the people mentioned are no longer of this world. Probably Roger thought Darcy Freebooter what all collateral younger sons of his stock had been for three centuries: it was described by his surname. Percy Bracket, he defined mentally as quite ignorant of the Empire he unceasingly boomed (not without a practical purpose, for he expected most company promoters to give him a block of paid-up shares or "let him in on the ground floor"). The Rt. Honble. Applebody Bland reminded Roger of Mr. Quale in *Bleak*

House, whose mission it was to be enthusiastic about everybody else's mission . . . and recalled to Lucy, by the jets of saliva which accompanied his easily provoked eloquence, her special African horror, the Spitting Cobra. And Albert Greystock was too good for this world. He believed any one who advocated enlarging the British Empire was a pure-souled missionary of civilization, incapable of a base greed for gain or other interested motive. He also believed that once a backward or savage country had been painted red on the map there was nothing more to be done or said. There it was: saved, happy, and gratefully contented.

These people all said in turn " it was *monstrous* "— a man who could in six years accomplish such encouraging results in a part of Africa unfortunately for the time being under Germany *must* be brought back to British Administration. *Choselwhit* must be seen, *Wiltshire* button-holed, the *Rothschilds* nudged, and *Rhodes* got round. . . .

Roger, however, was not going to risk the substance for the shadow or be disloyal in the slightest degree to the generous Schräders. He would buckle-to, make his pile, bank it; and *then,* perhaps, weigh in, scatter the chaff and garner the grains of Imperialism. And of one thing he was jolly well sure — thinking back on his faithful Somalis, his cheery Wanyamwezi, on the well-mannered, manly Masai, the graceful Iraku, and the obedient Wambugwe: he would see that the Black men and Brown men reaped full advantage for the White man's intrusion into their domain. They should receive compensation for disturbance and be brought into partnership, not only of labour and effort, but of profit.

CHAPTER XX

THE BOER WAR

From Lady Silchester to her cousin, Captain Roger Brentham.

Stellenbosch,
Cape Colony,
March 25, 1900.

DEAR ROGER,—

Your letter from Magara of last December reached me in London just as I was leaving with Landolphia Birchall (she kept her former name when she married the Booky . . . and *quite right, too* — you *never* know how a second or third marriage is going to turn out, and at any moment may want your old name back). We came out here to see something of the war at close quarters and to set up a hospital and a convalescent home for the sick and wounded officers and men.

I cannot tell you how *proud* and *pleased* I was you had *done the right thing.* People — especially that horror, Willowby Patterne . . . my dear, he is going *bald as an egg,* with a *terribly* pink neck, all due to some mistake in a hair-restorer, he says, but I say it is a vicious life — people were saying odious things about you the last year or two for developing German East Africa instead of one of our own colonies. But I knew — and always said — your heart was in the right place and that *once* you saw old England was in a tight place you would come to her assistance. There is nothing like one's own country, after all, is there? —

"*My country, right or wrong!*"—one of the few ex-cabinet ministers who is running straight said last December at a meeting I got up at Reading. Some rude man in the audience called out, "But why don't you set it *right? Then* we should know where we are." But you must expect such retorts from people who know nothing of foreign policy.

I wonder how you got away? Lucy and Maud, I suppose, you have left behind. The Kaiser seems rather friendly to us, they all say, and is going to be pacified with Samoa and more pieces of West Africa. So I suppose your concession will be all right, whilst you are away, and the Germans won't do anything unkind to poor Lucy and Maud. Or have they returned to England? It is France who is showing her teeth, not Germany! Chocho has very rightly told her "to mend her manners." She is a *pig* . . . she can't forgive our taking Egypt and turning back Marchand at Fashoda.

Even Spain has seized the opportunity to get her own back. It seems Lord Wiltshire called her a decaying nation during the war with the United States, and she has been saying through her press after each British defeat: "Who's the decaying nation *now?*" I must say she had some cause! Never were we more bitterly disappointed in our Generals—before Lord Roberts came out. They started off—some of the dear old trots, with Crimean whiskers, if you'll believe me—as pleased as Punch; and their silly young A.D.C.'s got the porters at Waterloo station to stick labels on their luggage "To Pretoria," "To Bloomfontain" (Is that how it's spelt?). And, of course, the only result of this boastfulness was that as soon as the old footlers got out there they fell into ambushes and lost their way and their men, and were deceived by guides, and the soldiers quite lost heart and got taken prisoners.

England in December! I shall *never* forget it! I couldn't sleep for *nights* and *nights,* and Vicky Masham told me the Queen's health received such a shock that she will never be quite the same again. . . .

Of course, now we can breathe once more. As you are on the spot and I dare say in the thick of it all, I need not tell you how things have gone since Bobs and K. of K. came out.

Well, of course, with all this going on in South Africa you couldn't expect any loyal Englishwoman who wasn't positively tied down by home duties to remain at home. So I sent Clithy to Eton — he's nearly thirteen now — and kept on his governess to mother him when he comes from school, and also confided him to the general care of Maurice, whom he likes. By the bye, I've pensioned off old Flower now, or at least got rid of him with a premium, and Maurice is full Agent, and I've advised Maurice to take on as an assistant Marden, the County cricketer, your wife's brother-in-law! Well. Having done all this and girded up my loins, so to speak, I made interest with old General de Gobyns at the War Office — such an old darling — he served with Wellington, I believe — and came out here with Landolphia Birchall, to supervise hospitals and give a general eye to the sick and wounded, read to them, write letters home for them, change their bandages, if it isn't too complicated — and so on. It was partly the thought that *you* were out here that decided me to come. Don't forget if you are wounded or ill to let me know and I will try to come to you or get you put into one of my hospitals. That *would* be jolly!

Landolphia is a funny old party! She must be quite fifty. She was so ill crossing the Bay of Biscay. Owing to the disgraceful amount of room the staff officers took up on the steamer she and I were jammed together into one cabin. Where our maids were put,

I don't know — in the stoke-hole I think. But we scarcely saw them all the voyage and when we landed Sophie gave me notice at once, only she can't get a passage home so she has had to let it stand over till I choose to return. Of course, under the circumstances, Landolphia could keep nothing back from me — she was *so* sea-sick; as she said, that she felt herself naked, face to face with her Maker. So everything had to be explained — her secrets of make-up, her sachets of peau d'espagne, her dress improvers and peculiar stays and adjusted shoes. I suppose (though I laughed inwardly till I *ached,* she looked so droll when she was taken to pieces) I must have been good to her in her dire affliction, for she's clung to me ever since, and says we are sisters without a secret between us. After all, with all these infirmities and "adjustments" she was a plucky old thing ever to come out. Now she thinks it an awful lark —

By the bye, she protests with tears in her eyes that her third husband is *not* a booky, he's a *trainer,* which, it appears, is a vastly superior calling. She also says she oughtn't to be judged so harshly over her marriages. The second husband, Captain Birchall, only lived with her for three months and then broke his neck in a point-to-point steeplechase. She lived twenty years with Augustus Gellibrand, and she really only married her present old man — Dawkins — because she got into such a tangle over her racing debts and he put them straight. . . .

* * * * *

Do let me know if and when this gigantic letter reaches you!

Your devoted
SIBYL.

As will be seen later, this frank outpouring did not come into Roger's hands for five or six months. For-

tunately Sibyl had also sent him several picture post-cards with photos of herself and Lady Landolphia dressed in nurses' costume, or a kind of hybrid costume between a nurse and a nun. These reached him at his Agents' in Durban. So he wrote to her from that place and was rather pleased to think she was in the same sub-continent as himself. It diminished slightly the acute form of home-sickness from which he suffered after first landing in Natal.

Once more he asked himself if he had done the right thing in volunteering for the South African War. His Agents at Durban, being German and Dutch, were at most coldly polite and there seemed to be no rush on the part of the authorities to enlist his services. In order to have two trusty servants who would take care of his baggage and perhaps follow him in campaigning — they would make most admirable scouts — he had brought with him to Durban two of his Somali gun-carriers. After landing with them at Durban and reporting himself to the military head-quarters as a former captain in the Indian Army, he had the deuce-and-all of a bother to get food and lodging for these wretched Somalis, who were at once classed by the ignorant Natalians as "just ordinary niggers" . . . though why "just ordinary niggers" should be so ill-treated, he could not understand. No hotel would lodge or feed them except in a kind of pigsty with hog-wash for food, where the kitchen Kafirs abode. They might not go into a shop and buy food, or rather they might go in but no one would serve them. After dark they must have a "pass." They very narrowly escaped jail and the whip and disappearance for ever from his ken by defending themselves with all a Muslim's pride when cuffed and pushed and flouted.

Roger very nearly — for that reason and for the mosquito-preserves of Durban then called "hotels"—

turned tail and re-embarked for German East Africa; but fortunately there came along a Colonel who had *not* served under Wellington or even seen the Crimea, but was no older than Roger — 42 — and had known him in London.

"You're just the type of man we want, with your knowledge of the bush and of niggers. . . ."

"No, don't call them that; it — it — riles me after the years I have worked with them. . . ."

"Well, Negroes, the bonny Bantu, the blameless Ethiopians, if you will. . . . And you ought to be a master-hand at bush-fighting. We're going to get up a sort of mounted infantry, don't you know. You're just the man to be given a small command. You need not tell me you can't ride, can't get every ounce out of your mount, 'cos I know better; or that you can't manage horses so that those entrusted to your men don't die in three weeks. Didn't you once tell me you bred Basuto ponies in G.E.A.? Well, I'm here, there, and elsewhere, buying Basuto ponies. Just stay here and get your uniform and equipment — here, give this card to our Supply department — and then report to General Buller. I'm writing him fully about you. . . . Oh yes. . . . And as to your nigs. I mean your two high-bred Fuzzie-wuzzies. Of course, we don't employ Negro soldiers . . . 'gainst the rules. But we engage thousands as batmen, transport-riders, grooms, and everything else. I'll fix it up somehow that you take your two darkies with you. They seem to know what I'm sayin'. What jolly teeth. They look hefty men and a dam' sight handsomer than some of the Johnnies you'll see on the Rand, when we've got Oom Paul on the run . . ."

So in course of time, Roger, first brevet-Major for gallantry in action, then a full Major — if there is such

a simple rank no longer qualified with adjectives (but I know after his campaigns in the Transvaal he was always styled "Major" Brentham, till he was made a Colonel) — found his way (always attended by Yusuf Ali and Anshuro, his Somali batmen) into the eastern Transvaal at the period when President Kruger and the other members of his Government were leaving Pretoria for the Portuguese frontier.

In the month of August he took part in a concentration of British forces against two Boer commandos in the north-east Transvaal. This resulted in a technical victory for the British, but whilst the tide of battle rolled away northwards to seize Pietersburg, the Boers were left in possession of the site of the first skirmish. And in a sudden hush after great clamour Roger realized that he was lying in the shade of some bushes near a little *spruit* of water, shot through the thigh and quite incapable of sitting up. The bullet or bullets had gone clean through the fleshy part of the right thigh and grazed the knee of the left leg. Happily they had not broken the thigh bone or cut the great artery. The Somalis, who had a magical faculty of turning up when most wanted, had come in handy as renderers of first aid, had stopped the hæmorrhage. They now squatted on the ground beside their fainting master, fanned his sweating face, gave him water to drink and occasionally sprinkled his chest and forehead with water to ward off the deadly faintness. . . .

A Boer Colonel came riding by, scanning closely the scene of the struggle. He claimed the unconscious Roger as his prisoner — out of pity — and whistled up carriers and a stretcher to bear him to the nearest dressing-station.

Here he was attended to by one of the numerous German doctors who had volunteered for service with the Boer armies.

From Major Roger Brentham, D.S.O., to Lady Silchester.

British Hospital,
Unguja,
Novr. 27, 1900.

DEAREST SIBYL,—

A steamer coming from the south to-day brought me your letter of last March! I had got several of your postcards showing yourself and Lady Landolphia in nurses' uniform and with dreadful smiles of glittering teeth, and knew of course — heard, I mean — what you were doing for our men out in South Africa. The letter was sent on by my Agents; I expect it got hung up in the military censorship, and I must say I don't blame them! Your unconscious criticisms of our generalship were pretty pungent. I wonder I got it at all. But better late than never! After I have read it a third time I shall burn it because there is one classical tag I never forget: *Littera scripta manet.*

I see by the London papers of September you are not only back in England — or rather Scotland — but entertaining as of yore at Glen Sporran. And playing with the same old toys! How indefatigable you are in your pursuit of power! How unwearied by the social routine, which would drive me into exile or into murder. I should end by killing the poor old *fantoches* — Vicky Long-i'-the-Tooth, Stacy Bream, and the others — I forget their names — the Right Honble. gentleman who spat like a cobra — only it was very kindly saliva, not at all venomous — and that moral enthusiast over the Empire — Albert Something. I see by the same paper he is now Lord Bewdly and has been uttering some beautiful sentiments over the results expected from the Boer War. . . . You were Stellenbosched, and with reason, because your hospitals and convalescent homes were there (I see, by the bye, that Wil-

lowby Patterne, who came an awful cropper at Driefontein and generally misconducted himself, was also Stellenbosched by K. of K. I hope you did not foregather with him?) . . . Well, as I was saying, you were Stellenbosched and saw little of the horrors of War. But I did, and I used often to wish that Albert person could have been with me and seen the burning of the homesteads, the cutting down of the fruit-trees, the fugitive women and little children, the Boer boys of eleven and twelve dressed up for war like their fathers and elder brothers and fighting for their homes. I saw one of these boys — tousled yellow hair, nice grey eyes — in a buckskin suit much too big for him, laid out to die by the road-side, just after we had burnt his father's home. I don't suppose one of our chaps really set out to kill him. But there it was; he had been shot through the lungs and was gasping out his life, blood pouring out of his mouth at each gasp. And yet he tried to smile and said something in Dutch about his father being away. . . . Upon my word I should have liked to get the Kaiser, old Kruger,—— and ——[1] all strung up together on the site of that farm. For they are the four men who together made this most unnecessary war. I know what lots of our Tommies said when they heard Kimberley was relieved!

As for me, I was laid out soon after with two bullets through my thigh. But for Yusuf Ali and Anshuro, my two Somalis; and equally but for a humane Boer (Colonel van Rensselaer), I should certainly have died. As it was, the hæmorrhage was stopped and a German doctor at the field hospital nursed me through a bad attack of blood-poisoning. I shall never, of course, be quite the same man again; but I still feel as though there were a lot of push in me. Soon after my admission

[1] I shrink from perpetuating all Roger's indiscretions and impulsive statements.— H. H. J.

to the hospital at Lydenburg, the Boers evacuated the place and in course of time I was transported to Durban and invalided out of the army with the rank of Major. I had already got a D.S.O., so *I* can't complain. I would fight any day for England against England's enemies, but — however, no more grousing. Let's hope a new order of things is going to set in. I certainly should like to cut my D.S.O. into three and give two equal bits to Ali and Anshuro. You've no idea what those Somali boys were in the matter of devotion, cheerfulness, astuteness! And yet they only served me for the ordinary coast wages; though of course I'm going to give them both a handsome donation when their time is up.

Well: here I am at a hospital once more. I must rest here and get my leg quite sound before I start for up-country. I have been here for a month, in telegraphic communication with Lucy and Maud, imploring them *not* to come down to the coast to meet me. Lucy, I fear, is far from strong; and Maud is simply indispensable to the carrying on of the work up there. She has shown herself as good as a man. The two Australians I put there have done their best, but they don't get on at all well with the Germans. Their education has been very poor — I mean in book-learning — they are rattling good in settlers' lore — and, of course, they utterly refuse to understand German and openly gibe at it. Their chief recommendation is that they are absolutely honest. . . .

I lie here chafing and intensely anxious for my worst wound to heal. I am told I ought to be thankful to have made such a wonderful recovery. But I feel a month of Lucy's care for me and the bracing air of Iraku would set me up altogether; and my mere presence at Magara put an end to all these misunderstandings and bitternesses.

The Schräders were rather aghast at my bolt for South Africa last year; but stood it on the whole very well. Of course, I insisted on being reduced to a third of my pay whilst I was absent. I retained just enough salary to keep Lucy and Maud going, and maintain the household. . . .

The whole German attitude over this war has been a curious one, and so have been its refractions on their attitude towards me. I hear that after my departure for the war a strong move was got up to oust me from the Managership. Now that I have returned wounded and a Major and a D.S.O. (that was given me the other day, for capturing Colonel Boshaert and three hundred men and a thousand cattle near Lydenburg — tell you all about it one day) they can't say enough in my favour. I am almost threatened with a triumphal procession home. . . . Engine from Tanga wreathed with palm fronds, etc. Fortunately the train will take me half the way back, and for the rest I can be carried in a Machila.

But there is little doubt that the mass of the Germans out here thought we were going to be gravelled by the Boers and that Germania would step into the shoes of Britannia. Undoubtedly the Kaiser for the past six years has been fishing in troubled waters, trying to connect up German South-West Africa with Boer territory, and planning to make Germany the dominant power in South Africa; or, at any rate, the honest broker between Boer and Briton. . . .

Why the Dutch and the British should be as oil and water in South Africa and elsewhere, I *can't* think. But they are. The Dutchman in Africa and Europe is just a rather finer built, better-looking Englishman or Scotchman; but in language, mentality and above all in a curiously hard attitude towards the Negro, he is Teutonic. The whole set of South Africa is towards

Germany. . . . That is why Rhodes lost his head. . . .

Your affectionate

ROGER.

P.S. See you next year or year after, as soon as ever I have got everything going here as it was before the war, and it is safe to come away. I *must* go on with this until I can retire with a competency.

CHAPTER XXI

THE MORALS OF THE HAPPY VALLEY

"I AM so glad, so *truly* glad you are almost your old self again," said Mrs. Stott, one brilliant morning in the spring of 1901, to Major Brentham, who had been four months back at his home in Iraku. He did indeed look as if he had in a measure recovered his good looks and energy, though the right leg was still stiff and much riding or walking brought on pain.

"It emboldens me to embark on a very disagreeable subject which I have been saving up to discuss with you. We cannot evade it much longer; so — if you have the patience —?"

"I am always patient with you, Mrs. Stott. There are few people I respect more. . . ."

"Thank you. Then I shall take up an hour or more of your time, if you are not very busy. But how is Lucy?"

"Lucy is not well; anæmic, Dr. Wiese says. I should send her home, only she refuses to go without me and I can't leave till next year. Dr. Wiese does not insist on her going before then. He is trying a new tonic which seems to be blood-making; it ought to be, because — though I do not tell Lucy — it is made of blood — one of these new German inventions. Wiese says if we would only do like the Masai and the Iraku: tap the veins of our cattle and drink the hot blood —"

"Ugh! don't let's talk about it; it makes me sick. I'm almost a vegetarian, you know. Couldn't we go

into your study? It is delicious here on the verandah, but I don't want to be overheard."

"Certainly: come this way."

"What *wonderful* petunias, yours are! I never saw such glowing colours. Your whole garden is a joy to the eye and a credit to the Concession. . . ."

"You're *right*. But the credit lies with Riemer, the plantation manager; he gives it an eye. The Germans are wonderful horticulturists. I don't think we sufficiently appreciate that fact at home. They are as good as the Dutch. Now then, here we are in my sanctum — rather untidy, I fear. . . . Take this chair . . ."

"No, it is too reclining. I *do* like an upright straight-backed chair when I want to speak out. My daughters say I'm like a character in one of Dickens's books, who could never loll. They're wonderful readers and remember everything they've read. . . ."

"Well now, what's the trouble?"

"It's — it's — this — horrid — *sexual* question I've come about. You know what Ann Anderson is — I prefer to call her Ann Jamblin — I don't like the two 'An's' together. Ann has a wonderful power for good, an energy in righteousness, and is as nearly sinless as any woman can be. But she's also got *such* an insight into other people's sinfulness that she spends much of her time denouncing their wrong-doing — too much, I think. I tell her she's out here to convert the blacks, and for the time being had better leave the whites alone. But she pays no heed to me — says her mission is to all men. She simply won't let the Germans alone. We had terrible rows sometimes when you were away, though your sister did what she could to smooth things over. I admit some of them are utterly wicked. There is that monster Stolzenberg — whom the Masai call 'The Terror'— *Olduria* —. After he came to the Lake with his Ruga-ruga last October and shot all the flamingoes. . . ."

"WHAT?" roared Roger, leaping to his feet, and then wincing . . . "I never heard this before . . .!"

"No? Well: sit down. You ought to rest your leg. Lucy didn't want you to know. She thought it would upset you so — And indeed, it was a shocking pity. . . . But you'd soon have noticed how few there are left — even from here on a clear day. . . . I understand Stolzenberg sent a huge consignment of their plumage to a firm he trades with in Marseilles. And he has been going about to other lakes doing the same. But I must stick to the point. . . . Where was I? Oh, yes! . . . Ann, who lives in our old station at Mwada, was awfully upset because she had become so fond of these birds, besides being infuriated at Stolzenberg's Ruga-ruga occasionally carrying off women. So she wrote him a letter saying that if he showed himself in the Concession again she would take a gun to him herself. She solemnly cursed him and called down Divine punishment on his head. Unfortunately — for I think the whole thing was *most* unwise — she paid a Masai who came along to trade to deliver the letter at Stolz's boma. The watchman at the gate made him come in and give the letter himself, and Stolz having read it had the man's left hand chopped off, tied it to his right, and said that was the answer to the English Missionaries and that was how he'd treat any other messengers sent to him. . . . The poor wretch arrived at Mwada a week afterwards nearly dead with loss of blood. . . . Of course, the Masai have again sworn vengeance against this monster: but what can they do? But that is not our worst trouble. Before you went, and whilst you were away, Ann took up the sex question. You know how set she was on the elevation of the native women? You used to laugh about her corps of Amazons, her 'Big-geru.' She hadn't been long with us before she began to interest herself in the young women of Iraku. . . . Those of the Wam-

bugwe are, I must confess, *hopeless* at present; I mean as regards chastity. Poor things! They are corrupted and degraded from childhood. But there is something superior — something of another race in the Iraku and Fiome. You said once they were partly descended from some Gala immigration of long ago? . . .

"Well, Ann, who is untirable, started a class of these Iraku young women before she had been six months in the Happy Valley. The chiefs — I dare say you remember speaking to some of them? . . . *quite* approved and sent their young daughters. She taught them cooking and laundry work, plain sewing, reading and writing. And now she finds, after they have been a year or two at our schools, they go off and live with white men. . . . !"

Roger: "I dare say they do, and have a much better time with them than with their own men. But what white men? German, I suppose? . . ."

Mrs. Stott: "Ah, *there* you touch my greatest sorrow. Yes. Every German I know on this concession keeps a native woman, mostly from our classes. But I fear — I fear — my nephew Phil and the clerk Stallibrass as well — my two Australian boys — are not much more moral. Their relations with the native women won't bear investigation. That is not all . . . and I have no right to be here as an accuser when I can't answer for my own son, Edgar. . . . You remember you offered in 1897 to take him home with you, and have him sent to an English school or college for a year or two? I wish . . . I wish . . . we had consented. It was so good of you. But we thought at the time that if children can grow up into God-fearing men and women in Australia without leaving the back-blocks or the bush, why not here, where the climate is good? Then there was the question of the cost. . . ."

Roger: "I suppose he has got all his education from you and his father?"

Mrs. Stott: "Yes, indeed. The main thing, besides religion, was to teach our children to read and write and do simple accounts. All they wanted besides was to read the books we ordered out. . . . I'm sure you can't say we have been indifferent to literature?"

Roger: "No — not of a certain kind . . . but all of it, from what I have seen, is rather old-fashioned and goody-goody. . . ."

Mrs. Stott: "I don't agree. However, I won't stop to argue about it. It matters little, since Edgar from the age of twelve or thirteen has cared very little for reading. His passion is *sport*. And to think how I ran down big-game shooting, when it was not vitally necessary for our supplies! Of course, James is a good shot and a clever hunter, and Edgar, after he was twelve, used to go out with him. He killed an elephant to his own gun when he was only fifteen, and the tusks fetched as much as £60! He *was* proud. Now his one idea is to be away shooting . . . and trifling with these Iraku women. Oh!" (crying a little). "*Can't* you see how it *silences* me? Ann talks about cutting off a member that offends and says I should expel my own son from the Mission for loose living. . . . I can't do that, and besides there's nothing proved. . . . But I can't very well join her in her crusade against . . . she *will* use such plain words . . . against fornication and unclean living. I suppose we shall have to send Edgar away . . . back to Australia . . . And then I fear much for his future. Thank goodness! He's a total abstainer, so far. . . . Ought we to invite some young woman to come out here for the mission, in the hope that he might marry her and settle down?"

Roger: "Wouldn't be a bad idea, if you could

insure her taking his fancy. I haven't seen Master Edgar for months or taken much notice of him since he came to man's estate. Struck me, he was growing up a nice-looking lad. . . ."

Mrs. Stott: "Indeed he is! It's his good looks that are his snare. . . . The native women run after him so. . . ."

Roger: "Does he work for us or for the Mission?"

Mrs. Stott: "He is his father's assistant in the Carpentering school; but he's too much given to larking with the boys, who look upon him as a kind of hero. Of course, he speaks their language almost as if it came natural to him. His real bent is for Natural History . . . that's the only excuse for his sport. We sell the collections he makes to the Germans. One of your mining engineers has taught him photography. He takes wonderful pictures of wild life. We posted some home to the *Graphic,* and with the money they paid, Edgar sent to Unguja and bought himself a snapshot camera. . . . Am I keeping you from your work?"

Roger: "You are: but we don't often meet nowadays for a talk. Let's thrash this matter out. Well?"

Mrs. Stott: "Well, I was going on to say, with all this Edgar's mind is turning away from religion. We have hard work to get him to attend our services. . . . He even shocked his father the other day by saying he was sick of the Bible. . . . I say, 'even,' because ever since my dear James has been getting up these industrial schools you were so keen on, he has become less and less spiritually minded, more and more interested in the material things of this world. He only *pretends* to care for the Second Coming of Christ . . . just to please me. He is much more interested in his new turning lathe" . . . (dabs her eyes and blows her

nose). "His prayers have become very trite. If it wasn't for my daughters. . . ."

Roger: "Let me see: you have two daughters out here — Pretty girls. . . . They must be growing up. . . ."

Mrs. Stott: "Yes. Carrie's nearly nineteen; and Lulu is sixteen. We called her 'Luisa,' not from the English name, but because 'Luisa' means 'darkness' in Kagulu, and when she was born she had dark hair and dark eyes . . . she's fairer now. . . . And the way, then, seemed dark before us. . . . I was very ill at the time. . . ."

Roger: "And then the eldest of all is at home, I mean in England. . . . ?"

Mrs. Stott: "Yes. Rosamund, named after me. She's a school teacher in Ireland, and practically a stranger to us. That's one of the sorrows of our life out here. Not that we haven't many blessings to counter-balance it — I'm sure the way we've kept our health in the Happy Valley — But we have either to send our children away to England or Australia, or bring them up here, with many disadvantages. It would be a pity to bring Rosamund away from a career where she is doing very well. . . ."

Roger: "Quite so. Well then, we have only to deal with Carrie as a possible wife to one of our young men. . . ."

Mrs. Stott: "As a matter of fact, Riemer proposed to her a few months ago. But Carrie is very particular; and besides, she wouldn't marry a German. . . ."

Roger: "What nonsense! In what way are they inferior to Englishmen or Australians? I'm sure Riemer . . ."

Mrs. Stott (tightening her lips): "Not to be thought of. Riemer is an avowed atheist . . ."

Roger: "Oh, of course, if religion is to come in the way. . . ."

Mrs. Stott: "It isn't only religion, there are other things. No. Don't let my daughters come under discussion. Why couldn't the Germans here send home for nice German girls to come out and marry them, or get married when they next went on leave . . . ?"

Roger: "Why not, indeed? I'll talk to them. Much better they should do so. But then, what'll happen by and by is what *you* don't want to happen. The Germans will marry white women, have large families and gradually push out the Negroes and turn this into a White Man's country — unless the climate and the germ diseases forbid. . . . I'm not sure myself that I don't favour a mixture of races and that the Americans for example are not better suited to America because of their strong underlying element of Indian blood — I suppose you would not like it if the Germans married their concubines?"

Mrs. Stott: "As an Australian I am prejudiced against the mixture of the races . . ."

Roger: "Well, but Dame Nature isn't, in her inconsequent way. First she prompts the original human ancestors — your Adam and Eve — to segregate and separate and differentiate into sub-species, almost. Then she seems sorry for it, and does all she can to bring them together again, prompts the White man to travel all over the world and mix his blood freely with that of the other races. She has been redeeming the Negro from his original blackness and apishness by sending white immigrants into Africa for thousands of years — Egyptians, Carthaginians, Romans, Greeks, Arabs, Indians; Portuguese, Dutch, French, English; to say nothing of all the Mediterranean peoples who pressed into Africa in prehistoric days. They have all mingled with the Negro in their time and re-humanized him. You own to a *penchant* for the Iraku people. Why? Even for the Masai. Why do you really prefer them to the out-and-out Negro type, like

the Kindiga and Wambugwe? Because they have a strain of ancient white blood in their veins. Same thing with the Swahili. We like them because of the Arab intermixture. And yet we talk and write a lot of rubbish about disliking the half-caste between a European and a Negro — By the bye, since we are talking on this subject, did I or did I not see a half-caste child in the compound of Schnitzler, that mining engineer who is such a friend of Edgar's?"

Mrs. Stott: "You did, at least Schnitzler's native woman has had a child by him — two years ago. And if you looked all through the settlement you could find three other half-caste infants. . . . They make no secret of it. . . ."

Roger: "Why *should* they? If they must form these unions, it is better they should be sanctified by the production of children. I must say it redeems the whole thing in my eyes; the Germans don't ignore their half-caste children, but have them properly brought up. It is better than what you call 'sinning in secret' and blushing at — or repudiating the consequences. . . . This *maddening* question of sexual irregularities, which now seems to clog the progress of all European Colonies, and to fill up the press of the United States and of England — are they always writing about it in Australia?"

Mrs. Stott: "Strange to say, we never get any Australian papers. I don't know whether Phil does either. . . . I seem to belong so very much more to England or to north Ireland, where all my relations live. . . ."

Roger: ". . . I often wish the Almighty or Nature or Chance — or whatever it was that developed us out of lifeless matter — had not tried this clever trick of the two sexes — I suppose it began a hundred million years ago, in the union of two entirely different microbes. I wish we had been allowed to go on in-

creasing by fissure, by budding. Certainly among the world-problems of to-day it is the most difficult to solve. I sometimes feel irritated against Christianity for the fuss it makes about Chastity. But I imagine it arose from the tremendous revulsion that took place in the Eastern Mediterranean two thousand years ago against an excessive sexual licence: just in those very countries where the purest doctrines of self-restraint were afterwards preached. The Christian ideal certainly seems the most likely to promote a good type of human being, but it is very hard to live up to. . . . Yet what texts you could find — in favour of Chastity — you missionaries — *if* you only realized the history of the Negro and did not go merely to the Old and New Testament for your pegs to hang a sermon on. The Negro is in his present inferior position because he has weakened his mental energy by extravagant sexual indulgence — and limited his numbers. Do you find the Happy Valley any less depraved than Nguru or Ugogo?"

Mrs. Stott: "I should *think not.* A little worse, if possible! I assure you, Major Brentham, when we first arrived from Australia I had *no conception* there could *exist* such *depravity, such* vices. They were referred to here and there in the Bible. But I did not know what the references meant. . . ."

Roger: "Well: there you are. *That* is a justification for your being here, as in other parts of Africa. . . . If you and we can only give the Negro *something else to think of.* He is like our labouring class at home. It is the only pleasure he knows of. Give him education, ambition, sports, remunerative work, an interest, even, in better food, in better houses, pictures, music, theatres. . ." (Mrs. Stott shudders.) "Well: there you are, making a face at the theatre. You won't distract the Negro — or the European — from indulging sexual desires by prayers and hymns and the read-

ing of ancient scriptures: *that's* certain. I know we differ there, and you must be already worn out with this lengthy conversation. As you've stayed so long, stay a little longer and have lunch with us? Lucy was only saying this morning she never sees you nowadays. You can go and have a talk to her, while I glance through these reports. See, by the bye, they give your donkey a feed, and put it safely in the stable. The other day one of ours disappeared. Of course, they said it was a leopard ——"

At luncheon. The dining-room at Magara House is a fair-sized apartment, with walls of well-smoothed cement surface of pinkish tone, due to red ochre being mixed with the cement. On the walls are hung a few clever pastel studies done by a talented German horticulturist who has an eye for colour and design; there are trophies of shields and spears; there is a dado of native matting; and a smooth floor surface of red *chunam* plaster, made by Indian masons from the coast. In a pleasant bay which looks on to the front verandah a magnificent lion's skin lies between the window-seats. . . .

A Swahili butler and footman clothed in long white *kanzus,* with white "open-work" skull-caps, and black, gold-embroidered *visibao,*[1] are serving the luncheon, cooked admirably by the still surviving husband of Halima, the Goanese Andrade. The meal consists of chicken broth, flavoured with grated coco-nut and red chillies; curried prawns (out of tins); kid cutlets and chip potatoes; Mango "fool"; and a *macédoine de fruits* — fresh pineapple, bananas, sliced papaw, and oranges. [A little Rhine wine flavoured the fruit-salad and was served at table with Seltzer water.] Then, in the alcove with the lion skin [the door-window opens on to the verandah with the petunia beds below

[1] Sleeveless waistcoats.

in carmine and purple blaze] the servants place Turkish coffee and cigarettes. Mrs. Stott only drinks Seltzer water and declines a cigarette; but thoroughly enjoys her lunch and congratulates Lucy on the flower-decorations of the table. . . .

"It's Hamisi, our butler, that deserves your praise. I get so easily tired in these days that I seldom do the flowers as I used. I make up for it by doing all the mending that Maud will let me have and writing all the letters home. John and Maudie expect a full account of our doings every month. . . . And dear sister Maud that is here, is always busy over our accounts and Roger's business correspondence and her poultry farming. You know whilst Roger was in South Africa she almost took his place!"

"Oh, as to that," says Maud, who has a strong sense of justice, "you must all admit Hildebrandt and Dr. Wiese both played up. I shall *never* forget how loyal they were to Roger . . . they might have been Englishmen . . . and that, too, at a time when other Germans out here were looking askance at us, and that horrible Stolzenberg was threatening to raid the Concession and seize the mines . . ."

"By the bye," says Roger, "you never told me, either of you, about the Flamingo outrage. There are many things I could forgive, but not that. It was one of my great pleasures out here, going to see the Stotts and watching the flamingoes on the lake shore. If I'd been here at the time I should certainly have followed up the brute and shot him . . ."

"We didn't tell you because we wanted you to get well, and feared you might do something violent before your leg was healed."

"Well, now that I know, I shall certainly lodge a strong complaint with the German Commandant at Kondoa. . . ."

"Ann Anderson has solemnly cursed him for his

cruelty," said Mrs. Stott. "She said so in the letter she sent him by the poor Masai whose hand he chopped off. I think that, by the bye, is better worth taking up with the authorities than the flamingo massacre. I'm afraid you won't find many of the Germans sympathize with you there, though I must admit they are a great loss to the scenery. But Ann said in the letter: 'If man doesn't punish you, God will.'"

"Of course," said Roger, "it is a scandal the way the Germans tolerate this monster, just because, like Patterne — I suppose *he* hasn't turned up again? . . ."

"Don't know."

". . . Just because he lives on the outskirts of civilization in no man's land. I shall try a ride on one of the Basuto ponies next week, go first of all and see your old station of Mwada, interview Ann, remind her of the parable of the Mote and the Beam, ask her to go slow . . . with these denunciations of moral frailty; and get some idea of the damage done to the flamingoes. I expect my complaints may draw down on me counter remonstrances from the Germans. I heard a growl the other day from a Herr Inspektor of Native schools that you taught no German" (addressing Mrs. Stott), "only Swahili and a little English. What could you do in that respect? I should not like them to have any excuse for interference with you. . . ."

"*Oh!*" said Mrs. Stott, her face paling at the very thought, "after all the *time, labour, money* — much of it *your* money — that we've put into Mission work in the Happy Valley. Oh, *why* wasn't it taken over by the English . . . ? . . . I think it would *break my heart* to leave it and begin our work over again. We've got so fond of the people . . ."

"Don't be down-hearted," said Roger, "I shall always stand up for them as long as I'm here, and I have no intention of going — except for a holiday — for ever so long. . . . *What a strange noise. . . ? ! . . .*

A prolonged, distant rumble, like the sound a big avalanche makes in the Alps: and before they could speculate on its meaning, the ground trembled under their feet, the two-storied house seemed to sway this way and that, and then settle itself with a jarring thud. Fine dust fell from the ceiling; trophies of shields and spears came clattering down, the glass and china on the table tinkled, the finger-bowls giving forth a prolonged musical note. Outside, after a moment's hush, cocks crowed, hens whooped, geese raised grating screams, peacocks honked and yelled, turkeys gobbled and crowned cranes threw back their golden-crested heads and uttered their resounding call.

"An earth tremor," said Roger in an even voice, for Lucy looked like fainting. "A *very small* earthquake; *nothing* to be alarmed at, though it turns one a bit sick inside. They don't often happen. This is only the second I've experienced in ten years. You see, we live on the border of a volcanic region. Here, *Lucy!* Pull yourself together. Have a nip of brandy? . . .

"Better? Let's get out into the air, on the verandah, and see if any damage has been done. . . . I hope it won't affect our mining galleries. . . ."

But no reports of damage from the earthquake came to hand. The natives said that these shocks were sometimes followed by outbursts of gases, smoke, steam from one or other of the craters in the north.

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A week after Mrs. Stott's visit, Roger, accompanied by Maud to look after him and see he did not overstrain himself, rode down into the Happy Valley to Mwada station. Here they interviewed the redoubtable Ann, now a square-built grey-haired matron of middle age and practically no sexual charm. She had black eyes, glowering under black eyebrows, a sallow complexion, and a thin-lipped mouth, with down-turned

corners, like the mouth of Queen Victoria when she was displeased. Ann listened in grim silence to Major Brentham's hesitating remonstrances. When he had finished she replied that it was more than flesh and blood could stand that she should be spending her time and the Mission money training up native girls to be Christian wives for Christian natives, and as soon as they had learnt some civilization they were sought out and snapped up by Germans, inside and outside the Concession. It wasn't for *that* she had come out to Africa. . . .

"I *do* feel for you and will see what can be done," said Brentham; "but at the same time we must remember we are not on British territory, where they stand a good deal from the missionaries, but in *German* Africa. The Germans have made a handsome acknowledgment of what Mr. Stott has done in the way of industrial teaching. Don't go and spoil it all by being too ready to denounce these — these — irregularities! Things may right themselves in time. It would be such a dreadful blow to the Stotts if they were told to go, to leave the work of so many years. . . ."

Ann would promise nothing, however. She would speak as the Spirit bade her. . . . For the present her time was taken up with mission work among the Wambugwe, who were *quite* the worst heathens she had met with. "Not only terribly depraved — they eat the corpses of their dead!!! — but the dirtiest Negroes I have ever seen, and *wholly* lacking in spirituality."

"Well then," said Roger, "*there* you've got your work cut out, for several years. Meantime I will talk to our German friends. . . ."

"*Friends,* indeed?" said Ann. "They're *no friends* of *mine!*"

In spite of her fierceness of denunciation, she made

both Roger and Maud as comfortable as she could at her rather Spartan station, and became so happy, friendly and even tearful during the evening with Maud, talking over the little world of Reading and Basingstoke, Aldermaston and Englefield, that evening prayers for once were intermitted. Her husband sat mostly silent, listening respectfully. It was evident that he worked very hard at material things during the day, that he stood much in awe of his wife, and had completely lost his gift of extempore prayer. Their one daughter was a thin, sickly, wistful little girl of ten, very shy, and fonder of her father than of her mother. But according to Ann she was already a good needlewoman, and helped in the sewing classes. Kind Maud proposed she should be fetched one day and taken to Magara for a week's stay. The air was so good there. Ann consented a little reluctantly.

They rode their Basuto ponies to see if there were traces of Stolzenberg's slaughter of the flamingoes. But the bodies had evidently been carried away from the lake to be skinned and because the bones were valuable; and the sole visible result of the raid was the absence of adult birds in pink plumage. There only remained of the former serried ranks a thin broken line of ugly immature flamingoes, dirty-white in plumage, streaked with brown. They were dibbling timidly in the thick waters of the lake; and this had also lost much of its former beauty — though Stolzenberg was not responsible for the slow desiccation of East Africa. The lake just now was no longer a uniform sheet of cobalt, bordered with a grey-white fringe of salt and guano mixed; it was reduced to two large areas of deep water with grey mud in between. How different from what Roger had seen in the glamour of 1888!

Away from the lake shore, in a detour through the foot-hills, they met a few wandering Masai on their

way to trade at the Mission station. They greeted Roger with acclamations of friendship and much spitting. Without an interpreter he could not understand them, but they kept pointing to the north-west and evidently referring to the wicked Stolzenberg under their name of *Olcduria* ("The Terror"); and at the same time to "God"—*Engai*. They talked with the satisfied tone of a thing now settled, and went on their way to interview the Woman-chief who was their medical adviser, and would-be converter.

"They may have heard of Ann's letter," said Roger, "and believe her curse is coming off. Do you see where they were pointing? . . . That curious cloud that seems to be rising high in the air, rising and falling, as though one of the craters were showing signs of activity?"

As soon as he returned to Magara, Roger drew up a formal complaint against Stolzenberg, addressed to the officer commanding in Irangi. He set forth the long tale of misdeeds on the part of "The Terror" during the past ten years and urged the German authority for the good name of the Empire to arrest and try this bandit. If this were not done, he would be compelled to place all the facts before the German directors of the Concessionaire Company whose employés' people and property suffered so much from Stolzenberg's raids and violence. The maiming of the Masai messenger was a concrete case, whatever might be thought of the offence in slaughtering the flamingoes, birds whose guano was one of the Concession's assets.

A fortnight later a military force of one hundred Askari and two twelve-pounder mountain guns arrived at Wilhelmshöhe — as the entire scattered settlement of the Concession in the Iraku Hills was called (at the request of the Schräders: the Stotts never got nearer the pronunciation than "Williamshoe"). The force

was commanded by two smart-looking German lieutenants and a white Feldwebel. The lieutenants, who saluted Brentham as Herr Major, said they were to act under his orders. He was commissioned as a magistrate to proceed to the Red Crater and arrest Adolf Stolzenberg, but not supposed to take any part in the fighting, if force was to be used. That was *their* business. The Herr Oberst who had sent them remembered that Major Brentham had been wounded in the South African War, and hoped he would take care of himself; if his health was not equal to the journey, then the nearest German district commissioner would go instead. But Roger, in spite of his wife's pleadings and Maud's warnings, was keen to see the thing through. Besides, he could serve as guide. So in course of time the expedition found itself drawn up on the grassy plateau and facing the heavy wooden door and stone wall. A summons to open in the name of the law was shouted by the Feldwebel, who had an immense voice. There was no response. Then the guns, put into position, came into play and shattered the door to fragments. One of the lieutenants and half the force marched in. . . . Half an hour elapsed. . . . Then the lieutenant reappeared with rather a scared face.

"We can only suppose either that Stolzenberg fled some time ago, or that his settlement has simply been engulfed by some appalling volcanic action. Come in and see!"

Roger and the rest of the force followed. Inside the Red Crater, which enclosed a space about a mile in diameter, very little could at first be seen but clouds of sulphurous vapours, which when wafted in their direction nearly stifled them; and clouds of steam where the little stream from the hidden pool at the further end of the crater fell into some gulf of heat ——

They advanced cautiously; the wind took a different

turn, and at last the rashest pioneers among them discerned the ground falling away abruptly over a sharp-cut edge into Hell — as a Dante might have deemed it. The sulphurous fumes drove them back. The inevitable conclusion — confirmed in time — was that the crater had reopened immediately beneath Stolzenberg's settlement. Houses, people, cattle had all been plunged into the bowels of the earth, hundreds of feet below to a fiery furnace. Those humans and cattle who were nearer the crater walls at the time had possibly been choked and killed by the gases. Indeed, on their way out, they saw here and there, at the bases of the red walls, dead cattle lying stiff, all four legs in the air. Evidently, inquisitive Masai, after the earthquake, had climbed the crater-rim from the outside and seen enough to guess that the white Woman-chief's curse had come home, and the great enemy of the Masai and his murderous band of raiders had gone suddenly to an awful doom.

CHAPTER XXII

EIGHT YEARS HAVE PASSED BY

EIGHT years have passed since Roger Brentham staggered, half stupefied with sulphur fumes, from the Red Crater; satisfied with a great sense of relief and no pity, that Stolzenberg and his raiding Ruga-ruga had come to a deserved end.

"The Terror" having been wiped out in a way which brought an enormous accession of prestige to Mrs. Anderson of the Ewart-Stott Industrial Mission, the Happy Valley Concession was relieved for a time of any active enemy. Willowby Patterne, who had again taken up his abode on his Namanga property (after having once more passed through the Divorce Court — this time at the instance of a deluded but determined American wife), may have been disposed to fish in waters of his own troubling, have itched to share in the immense wealth now pouring out from the region where Roger had forestalled him. But meantime he had been a little sobered by Stolzenberg's tragic end. So he devoted himself for these eight years to shooting enormous quantities of big-game on the scarcely inhabited tracts of northern German East Africa. The Germans remonstrated with him at times for his breaches of their perfunctory Game Regulations; but an equal disregard for these attempts to save the fauna was shown by German hunters. Willowby imported and exported most of his goods and supplies, all his hides and ivory by German railway routes, sent them to be sold in German markets, and took care to be on good terms with German frontier officials. So his baleful activities were not materially interfered with.

On the British side of the frontier he was also regarded with lenience for reasons not specified. He was popular among the East African planters because he kept the native in his proper place and evaded the "silly" restrictions on unlimited "sport." Apart from his matrimonial affairs, which were a source of recurrent, rather piquant scandal, he was not without a certain prestige in England. He had made his ranching property pay considerable profits out of the chase and cattle-breeding, and had thus pacified his most pressing creditors. He earned other large sums by acting, for three months in the dry season, as guide and arranger of big-game "shoots" to excessively rich Americans who wanted the thrill of firing into the brown of dense herds of antelope and zebra, getting perchance a maned lion without too much danger, or similarly bringing down an elephant of medium size (they would buy tusks "to go with it" from Patterne's store), or a record rhino (Patterne supplied the "record" horn; the poor specimen killed by the millionaire was given to the Andorobo trackers to eat).

Having accidentally brought to light several new varieties or sub-species of antelope among the thousands he shot for their hides and horns, he was deemed a great "naturalist" in the Cromwell Road Museum; and Roger's anger whenever his name was mentioned — calling up as it did many a mental picture of lifeless wastes of prairie strewn with bone-heaps where once rioted a wonderful and harmless Zoological gardens — was put down to jealousy of Patterne's marksmanship.

Twice in these eight years Roger had been to England. In 1902 he had escorted his wife and sister home, and stayed there six months to make his children's acquaintance. In 1906 he and Maud, who kept house for him at Magara in Lucy's absence, again returned for a long holiday; and in the following year

brought Lucy back with them for a last stay in the Happy Valley — a last stay, because Roger calculated on retiring from the management of the Concession in 1909. He would then sell out his shares, and on the proceeds would be wealthy enough to leave Africa to younger men and devote himself to home politics. No more, after 1909, would Lucy be torn in two in her affections, longing to be by her husband, pining in fact without him; yet miserable at the idea of her children growing up outside her care and supervision.

John, as it was, showed himself devoted to the splendiferous and dazzling "Aunt Sibyl"; and even Fat Maud (no longer a dumpling, but still distinguished by this adjective from the other Maud, thirty-five years older, and spare of build) . . . even Fat Maud preferred Englefield as a home to the humbler Church Farm at Aldermaston; and adopted a rather patronizing tone towards the quiet, pale-faced, languid, timid mother who had rusticated so many years in the wilds of Africa that she was ignorant of free-wheel bicycles, motor-cars, gramophones, two-step dances, ping-pong, hockey, and diabolo.

During these eight years Mrs. Bazzard's persistent letters to Sir Bennet Molyneux had their reward. Her Spencer was removed from malarial, out-of-the-world East Africa and made Consul-General at Halicarnassus, to preside with judicial functions over a Consular Court in Asia Minor, on £900 a year and allowances. Mrs. Bazzard foresaw for herself a glorious early autumn to her life, as a leading lady in the Levant, with an occasional dress from Paris, a prominence in Levantine Society, a possible visit of the Royal yacht to this old-world Turkish harbour where Herodotos once lived and wrote; and inevitably a knighthood on retirement for the re-animated doll, the Spencer into whom she had really infused new stuffing.

" Oh, that *dearest* Mother might live "— in Bayswater, it would not do to have her at Halicarnassus —" to refer to her daughter as ' Lady Bazzard '! "

She has long ceased to take much interest in the Brenthams, once Roger Brentham — with whom she believes herself to have had a serious and compromising flirtation in 1887, and sometimes hints as much to her Spencer when his interest in her flags — no longer has his name in lists of officials likely to get between Spencer and a Mediterranean post. She is, however, a little annoyed from time to time to see he is not socially dead . . . that highly placed officials actually notice him. For instance, the Bazzards when at home in 1902 could not obtain, try they ever so hard, a place in the Abbey to see King Edward crowned. But Roger saw the ceremony from a modest nook inside the nave; saw Sibyl in ermine and crimson velvet and ostrich plumes, nodding right and left to acquaintances and wreathed in smiles, pass before him with other peers and peeresses to her appointed place; and probably owed his seat to the intervention of the African Department of the Foreign Office, or to a request from the President of the Royal Geographical Society, as the recognition due to a distinguished explorer.

He had forgotten by now any rancour he might have retained for the Foreign Office, and would drop in at the African Department from time to time for a chat with " Rosy " Walrond — who was proposing to go to Unguja to tighten things up, and intended to come and stay with him in the Happy Valley and see with his own incredulous eyes the Red Crater and its bottomless pit, and the lovely maidens of Iraku who were the cause of Mrs. Anderson's heartbreak. Or with Ted Parsons — about to be named Consul-General at Naples; or kind old Snarley Yow, who said he wished now he had done like Roger: chucked the F.O. and a possible pension of £700 a year and gone in for an Afri-

can Concession like the Happy Valley — suit him down to the ground.

The remarkable success of the Happy Valley — the one bright spot in "German East," where there was never a native rising and whence came a regular output of minerals, precious metals, precious stones; coffee, fibre, rubber, cotton, tanning-bark, hides, poultry and potatoes; the steady standing of its pound shares at forty marks on the German exchanges, and the purring approval of the Schräders: caused Roger to be increasingly consulted in British Colonial circles outside the Colonial Office. Diplomatists took an interest in him, and adjusted their monocles at parties to see him better. The Foreign Office published as a White Paper a Report drawn up at their request on the Big Game of East Africa and its international importance. Was he to be a means of solving the nascent Anglo-German rivalry by suggesting a combination of effort in Colonization? The Schräders hoped so.

Mrs. Bazzard was really vexed to see one day in the weekly edition of the *Times* that on March 25, 1903, Major Roger Brentham, D.S.O., together with other guests whose names meant nothing to her, dined with Lady Silchester to meet the Right Honble. Josiah Choselwhit, etc., etc.

Sibyl at this time still believed Chocho to be the coming man, the Premier who would set the British Empire right, bring about an Imperial Customs Union and a Federation directed from London, and calm defiance to the rest of the world. She was one of the earliest of the B.M.G.'s.[1] Roger was of the opposite school, a school which at best achieves a cool popularity amongst thinkers. He wanted to bring about a moral union, so to speak, between the British Empire, Germany and the United States, a pooling of their resources; and Universal peace: to ensure which France

[1] *Vide* the columns of the contemporary *Morning Post*.

should be retroceded a portion of Alsace-Lorraine, and Germany allowed to grow into a great African Power. There were many faults in the German conception of how Negro Africa should be administered; but the same faults were to be seen in British Africa; the same reforms would apply to both régimes.

But Brentham, though he had distinguished himself in the fight with the Boers for the overlordship of South Africa, had disapproved of the policy of the Raid and had said so, and written caustically on the subject. His views in some other directions, especially on Free Trade with Africa, were diametrically opposed to those of the Idol of the Midlands; so that Sibyl's attempt to bring them together at her board in the hope that the Colonial Office might give scope to her cousin's abilities, was frustrated at the very start. Chocho said very little to Roger, and Roger, being anything but a self-pusher, said very little to Chocho.

During these eight years Lucy's father, approaching and passing the age of seventy, continued to farm at Aldermaston with vigour and geniality and less and less conservatism. Lucy's mother was hale and hearty, with apple-red cheeks, and placidly thankful to the Lord who had arranged all the affairs of her family so well — never mind what happened to *other* families: perhaps it was their fault. Lucy's sister Clara, who had married Marden the Cricketer, was amassing year by year an enormous family of alternate boys and girls, and, as Sibyl said, it would be interesting to encourage her to go on till she had passed the normal, and then exhibit her with her progeny at a County Show. Her husband proved an assistant Agent for the Silchester estate of progressively increasing worth, and let cricket go to the wall — or to Australia. His boss, the Head Agent, Maurice Brentham, lived much in London and in Staffordshire, supervising the affairs of the estate in those directions; and managing them

so well that when young Silchester came of age he would be among the wealthiest of our peers and able to write and produce mystic operas — if he so willed — or subsidize a whole Russian ballet — without feeling the cost. Maurice had never married. His excuse was the prolificness of Mr. and Mrs. Marden, the sufficiency of Roger's family, and the seven children (already) of his brother Captain Geoffrey Brentham, R.N. Geoffrey was a great begetter: almost like some hero of the Greek classics. He apparently only spent one month at home in every fifteen; yet his wife did little more — especially during these eight years — than lie-in, nurse, short-coat and wean one child; conceive, lie-in, nurse and short-coat another. Meantime her husband took enormous pains over naval marksmanship, and agitated himself over the quarrels of the Admirals. Mrs. Geoffrey was the daughter of a Naval Chaplain with very pronounced views on family prayer and the uncriticizable nature of the Bible; and on quite illusory grounds she decided that Roger and his missionary wife, Maud, Sibyl — who, she was sure, was the *real* cause of Maurice not marrying — were all rather wicked and not worth knowing: so, fortunately, she absolves me from any concern in her affairs.

Similarly I can dispose of Sibyl's father by saying that he died from a wandering clot in 1905, and that Sibyl only showed perfunctory regret: he had become a bore of the first water, obsessed by the belief that if only he had had capital behind him, his ideas about farming would have revolutionized British agriculture. Sibyl's mother, unwavering in her attachment to her spouse, whom she only remembered as the handsome young captain fresh from gallant service in suppressing the Indian Mutiny, who had won her affections in 1859, died also, soon after her husband, probably from some form of cancer. Aunt Christabel — the Honble. Mrs. Jenkyns in private life — also died within this period,

somewhere in lodgings — Bath? Both deaths occurred at awkward junctures when big political parties had to be put off at a moment's notice; and therefore wrung from Sibyl not only a few tears of sorrow and remorse — *Had* she been quite kind to either? Would *she,* too, live to be old, boring, unlovely, and consequently unloved? — but also exclamations of annoyance at people who chose the supreme moments of the season, when Royalty was once again showing an interest in you, to take to their beds and die.

Old Mr. Baines, the proprietor of the Aerated Beverages Manufactory at Tilehurst, died of diabetes in 1906. He left his money — a few thousand pounds — on trust to John, the eldest son of Captain and Mrs. Roger Brentham, subject to a life interest for Mrs. Baines. His spouse had led him a life, as he expressed it, since her son's death in 1888. She had passed from the most narrow-minded piety to a raging disbelief in all churches, sects, and creeds. The " raging " was chiefly inward or expressed through her pen in " open " letters to clergymen, philanthropists, or scandalized county journals. Otherwise she maintained a Trappist silence, neglected the house-keeping, injured the business by scaring away customers. At length in 1901 she took to denying in a loud voice, at Reading markets and other assemblages of crowds (as in her letters to the *Berks Observer* and the *Newbury Times*), the very existence of a God; and then public opinion obliged her husband to have her put away into an asylum.

Curiously enough she offered little opposition to this measure. She asked for, and was allowed, a large quantity of books, and became with the aid of new spectacles an omnivorous reader. She gave little trouble. Her husband made a liberal payment to the asylum, but as this ceased at his death, and the Trustees showed a mean desire for economy, it occurred to the medical

man in charge — not without a conscience — to re-examine Mrs. Baines and see if she really was mad. As a result he pronounced her restored to sanity. She made no comment on her release, faithful to her vow of silence, but with the help of her trustees she purchased a small cottage on the Bath Road near Theale. The sight of the enormous motor traffic and the bicycle accidents seemed to amuse her. Roger, during his 1906–7 holiday in England, at Lucy's wish went to see her, to be satisfied she was properly cared for. She received him in grim silence, offered a Windsor chair, and listened taciturnly to his stammering, apologetic inquiries. When he stopped speaking she drew blotter, pen, and ink towards her, and wrote in a bold hand on a sheet of notepaper: "The British people are *not* the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel; more fools they, if they were. I agree with you about Religion. I forgive Lucy. I am glad little John is to have my money when I die, but I shall live as long as I can to find out the Truth. Don't come any more."

She then conducted him to the door — it was in the shocking summer of 1907 — pointed to the grey sky of a cold, dripping July and to the ruined hay crops in an adjacent field, to the green corn beaten to the earth and to a collision between a motor cyclist and a push-bike on the Bath Road. Then her long, furrowed lips curved into an awful smile — a smile perhaps her dead son had never seen — her angry eyes and her crooked, uplifted finger expressed a derisive query as to the existence of any Providential concern for the welfare of Man.

Therewith she returned to her books and the studies she had taken up so late in life. Possibly she is living still at eighty-two.

During these eight years, Lucy's health, after some fluctuations, had decidedly improved; and when her husband was preparing to return in the autumn of

1907 for his final round-up of the Happy Valley Concession, she insisted on accompanying him. It would be for less than two years; Maud was coming too; and the children would be most of their time at school. Rather with misgivings Roger agreed. Provided she kept her health, it would indeed be a delightful conclusion to the great adventure of their lives. They would revel for the last time in the beauty of Iraku and the Happy Valley, their Crowned cranes and peafowl, their tame gazelles and duikers, their quaint menagerie of monkeys; their wonderful flower garden — Iraku grew everything: orchids and mignonette, roses and lilies, petunias and pelargoniums, *Strelitzia reginae* and *Disa uniflora*. . . . He would wind up his financial connexion with the Concession and retire from it a rich man, perhaps retaining a sleeping partnership in its concerns: for it was entangled with his heart-strings.

Then, all clear for Europe, after a cycle of Cathay. They would motor from Iraku to the nearest railway station on one or other of the lines that now penetrated the interior, secure the best cabins on the luxurious steamers of the D.O.A. line, and thus retrace the route of their first voyage, when love was incipient, but when their future seemed dark and uncertain. They would be lovers again on this voyage, but this time open and unashamed, and Maud should pretend to play the part of a green-eyed Mrs. Bazzard.

The first portion of this pleasant programme was fulfilled. For a year Roger rode from factory to mine, from coffee plantation to the fields and sheds where pineapples were grown, cut, and canned. He made good suggestions about their cattle, about war, unceasing war on the tse-tse fly, which — it was feared — was entering the Valley. He viewed with satisfaction his success over the crossing of Maskat donkey and Basuto pony mares with zebra stallions, and considered

it proved that the resulting mules might become a valuable factor in East African transport. He inspected the new ostrich farms, the new smelting works and the primitive ceramics where native women turned out excellent pottery for home use. He decided that further explorations for gold should be undertaken in Ilamba, and that a fresh reef should be opened up in western Iraku. They would waste no more money looking for the matrix of the diamonds — diamonds might go hang, there were plenty of them in German South-West Africa.

But this wolframite with its product tungsten: *that* was worth following up with persistence. It was more and more needed for the application of electricity and for the latest developments of metallurgy, and would alone make the Concession of great monetary value.

At the beginning of 1909 a cloud came over their happiness, contentment, and sense of security in the future. In the first place the Austrian annexation of Bosnia and its accompanying defiance of Russia by the shining-armoured Kaiser had inspired British statesmen with hand-in-the-breast-of-the-frock-coat speeches of the Pecksniffian brand; the harder to bear since we were engaged about that time in pushing Turkey out of Arabia and manipulating the partition of Persia. This, once again, soured the relations between Englishmen and Germans. Then, the value of the Happy Valley Concession, insisted on by Roger in his despatches to the Directorate in Leipzig, had reached the comprehension of the All-Highest and of the Imperial Cabinet. To these august personages it seemed incongruous and detrimental to German all-self-sufficiency that such an important portion of Germany's most important colony should be managed by an Englishman, and that an English Industrial Mission should contain a female of such measureless audacity as a certain "Ann Anderson" who had dared to write a letter to the All-Highest, com-

plaining of sexual licence on the part of Germans in East Africa. Let there be an end of this! The Englishman must go, the Industrial Mission must be replaced by some subservient Roman Catholic teaching fraternity from the Rhineland, which would attend to its prescribed functions of instructing the Negroes how to use their hands and in a limited degree their brains, and call nothing German in question, least of all the policy approved by the Kaiser's Kolonialminister. As to the Schräders: they meant well: they had tried to ride the German and the English horses abreast: a clever circus trick, but one that no longer consorted with Imperial aims. They were worthy financiers, but they had become too international, with their offices in Paris, London, and Johannesburg, as well as in Leipzig and Berlin. . . .

These august decisions had to be conveyed to Roger by the greatly disappointed Schräders, who had sought so perseveringly to co-ordinate the enterprise of the British Empire with that of Germany and France — internationalists before the proper time. They knew, of course, that Major Brentham purposed resigning his local Direction of the Concession in 1909, but they had half hoped he might have continued in Europe much the same function as a member of the Board. As it was, they had to ask him to go, instead of acquiescing reluctantly in his departure. And quite decidedly they had to request that all relations between the Concession and the Stott Mission be severed.

From the Imperial authority in East Africa the Ewart Stotts received the curt order to wind up the affairs of their mission and hand over their buildings and plantations to the Brotherhood of the Heiliger Jesu of Bingen-am-Rhein. They would be paid compensation for the actual outlay of their own moneys, and their teachers and subordinates would be granted the equivalent of a year's salary, at existing rates.

This not-to-be-appealed-against edict caused the Stotts the acutest sorrow and dismay; and Ann Anderson the most unbridled anger. Roger, however, counselled resignation and moderation of utterance. Let them take the compensation, get all they could out of the Imperial authorities, and migrate to neighbouring British territories, if they were still keen on Mission work.

"After all," he said, "I am going too, and you must feel, even if Hildebrandt is to succeed me, it would be difficult for you to remain here without my backing. Hildebrandt — and you all say you like his wife and that she is in sympathy with you — promises me that if he *does* succeed as Manager, he will do all he can for the natives and endeavour to get your policy continued by the Catholic teachers. . . . Go home and have a good rest. Go to England and take stock of what people are saying and doing. Get Ann to take lodgings for you somewhere in Berkshire . . . see the *best* of England. . . . *Then,* if you decide to come back to East Africa you could start another Industrial Mission on British territory among the Masai and the Nandi who would seem much the same as the people you are now leaving. . . ."

Ann, however, made her departure sensational. After handing over the keys of Mwada Station to the Catholic Mission she marched out to the centre of the market-place, on a hillock overlooking the lake; and in the presence of a large crowd of Masai and Wambugwe she solemnly cursed the Kaiser in Masai, Kimbugwe and English. It took more than nine years for the curse in full measure to take effect; but then the Kaiser was a much more important personage in the history of Africa than the occupant of the Red Crater, and the Devil no doubt fought far harder to save him.

In the spring of 1909 Lucy was again attacked by

pernicious anæmia, and Dr. Wiese's remedies failed this time to arrest its encroachments. "There is only one thing," he said, melancholy with foreboding at the departure of his English friends —" only one thing to save Mrs. Brentham from dying, and that is to send her quickly out of Africa on to a home-going steamer. The sea air *may* stimulate the recovery of the blood and help her to regain strength."

Roger therefore hurried through his preparations for handing over his work to Hildebrandt. It was thought better that with them should go the two Australians, so that the staff might be entirely German. Maud superintended the packing of their personal effects. Roger decided, partly out of liking for the Hildebrandts, partly from a horror he had of stripping the home where he and Lucy and Maud had been so happy, to present the Hildebrandts with its furniture and garnishings, and to take away as little luggage as possible. He did this almost with a kind of foreseeing that he might some day return. Maud felt very much parting with the Crowned cranes. Together with peafowl they are the most intelligent, inquisitive, well-mannered pets that the bird-world can produce.

The journey to the coast port where the steamer would call was accomplished in a motor ride of three days. Even to the dying and little-regarding Lucy this was in striking contrast to the three-weeks' to four-weeks' journey up-country in her novitiate; with its crushing fatigues, discomforts and frequent dangers. No more skulls and skeletons of recent raids, no more intrusive lions, no need to fall among soldier ants, no water famines and atrocious smells; no tedious waiting in hot sun or drenching rain, while an unstable tent was being fumblingly put up and a camp bed put together. When the motor halted for the night Lucy was transferred by kind hands, as in a dream, to a clean, sweet, cool couch in a decent bedroom. When

it was morning, after a breakfast she scarcely seemed to taste, she was placed in a flying-bed — as the motor seemed — and so the dream journey went on till she was aware of being in a boat and then hoisted up into the air in a bed, and finally put to rest in a cool cabin. Dream figures would pass through this half-real environment. John Baines seemed sometimes to stand by her bed or help her into the motor; Maud became confused with Ann, but surely a much gentler Ann? There was Brother Bayley, looking for her to read slowly through the Book of Exodus, so that he might translate it, phrase after phrase, into Kagulu. . . .

Once on the great steamer of the Deutsch Ostafrikansche Linie there seemed a ray of hope. They had deck cabins allotted to them. Two German Staff officers pretended they were *just* as comfortable on the tier below, and it would be *a pleasure* to help in Mrs. Brentham's recovery. She was quite a personage in the history of East Africa. . . . The steamer's captain, himself a married man, was kindness embodied. He broke through any regulations there might be to the contrary and had a section of the deck screened off opposite their cabins, so that no other passengers might pass through this open-air, shaded parlour in which the sick woman lay on a couch in a half-dream, even in a happy dream. Her day-bed or couch was screwed to the deck so that it would not be jarred or dislodged by movements of the vessel. Here she could lie all day or all night; her husband and her sister-in-law — such a formal term should not have been applied to Maud, she said; " sister in very truth "— could take their meal alongside where she lay.

At Unguja there came on board the new British Agent, Sir Edward Walrond, of the Foreign Office, to take farewell of Brentham since the latter could not leave his wife. He seemed to pass in and out of Lucy's dream — a pleasantly cynical person who only ex-

pressed sympathy with Roger by a hand-grip and laughed away the idea of Mrs. Brentham not being able to land at Naples and see the sights there, "with Ted Parsons to take you round — he is becoming *very* Pompeian in manner, I'm told." . . . Walrond sends on board all the fruit and delicacies he can think of, which might tempt Mrs. Brentham's appetite.

Archdeacon Gravening, who married her to John and then to Roger, comes off to see her. He is quite the old man now, the veteran of the Anglican Mission, always there, whatever Missionary Bishops come and go, always writing down Bantu languages, always trying to kill some secret sorrow of his own. He is alone with Lucy, kneels down for a few minutes by her day-bed, takes her hand, prays silently, says aloud: "My poor, poor child: I pray with all my heart you may surmount this weakness and live to be loved by your children. Think sometimes, when you are well and happy in England, of the lonely old man who married you to your good husband. I always said Brentham had done the right thing."

Then he lays some flowers between her hands that the Anglican Sisters have sent her. Lucy in her dream thinks they are marrying her again to Roger, and laughs at the absurdity of their not knowing she has been his faithful wife for — for — it is all so confusing — oh, ever so many years. . . .

Out in the open sea, the fresh boisterous air of the monsoon gives a flickering stimulation to the enfeebled brain and body, even causes a certain irritability and impatience, rare to her gentleness. "Roger! *Can't* they take me *quickly* home? Can't they make the ship go faster? . . ."

"My darling, she is going at a splendid rate; we shall be at Aden in four days. Aden! You remember Aden? Where we took Emilia Bazzard with us to spend that day, and saw the cisterns? I want you to

get *ever* so much better in those four days, because I must leave you then. . . ." Hastens to add, as her hold on his hand tightens: "Oh, only for a couple of hours whilst Maud takes my place, because I want to pay off our four Somalis on shore. If I gave them all their money on the ship they might gamble it away or have it stolen. You remember the Somalis? Our old faithfuls — been with us for — what is it? Eighteen years. Wonderful! They travelled down with us from Magara — often carried you out of the motor or into the boat. Every day they come for your news."

But she is not listening. . . . "Roger!"

"Yes, dear?"

"I don't want to get off at Naples, and I don't want you or Maud to leave me at Naples: I want to go *on* and *on* in this steamer till we reach England. . . . And, Roger! If I die before we get there, *don't* throw me into the sea as they generally do with people who die on . . . board . . . ship . . . take me on with you to England . . . take me home, won't you? Then I shan't mind dying. We've all got to die some day . . . that's what makes it all so sad. . . . I can't believe there can come an end to love, not love like mine for you; but it's horrible to think of lying at the bottom of the sea, and you perhaps in a grave on shore. . . ."

"You mustn't talk like this or you'll break my heart . . . but if it eases your mind, I promise you that you shall be taken home."

Then comes Maud — with the ship's doctor — and a hospital nurse, always carried on board for such cases. There is going to be transfusion of blood, and Roger bares his arm. . . .

A pause afterwards and she sleeps, sleeps and wakes, dreams she is with her children and they only call her "Aunt Sibyl," dreams she is once more at Mr. Calla-

way's, waiting to know if Roger is going to marry her. . . . Mr. Callaway? Didn't she overhear Roger asking after him from some one who came on board, and didn't they reply "Died of blackwater fever, *years* ago"? We must all die sooner or later, but oh, *why* might it not be later in her case? So much to live for!

She is awake again, looking at the brilliant sunlight on the dancing waves and the flying fish that rise in mechanical parabolas of flight that become monotonous. Some form is presently standing between her and this effulgence of sun on water. . . . It is the ship's captain, a big burly man with a close-clipped, russet beard and kind blue eyes. "*Zô,*" he says, with a mixture of gravity and lightness, "that is bet-ter, *moch* bet-ter. A . . . leetle . . . colour . . . now . . . in . . . the . . . cheeks. . . ." But his well-meant encouragement trails away into pitiful silence before her ethereal beauty and other-worldliness. Tired middle age has passed from her face with this infusion of Roger's blood. "What a pretty woman she must have been at one time!" he says to himself. His blue eyes fill with tears, and he turns away thanking his German God that his own Frau is not in the least likely to die of anæmia. . . .

The heat and airlessness of the Red Sea bring back a lowering of vitality. . . . The poor sick brain, insufficiently supplied with red blood, even inspires a peevish tone in the dying woman. "Oh, Roger! I've spoilt your life! You only married me 'to do the right thing'! I ought to have refused. . . . I broke your career," she wailed.

"*Lucy!* How *can* you say such cruel things. Here, drink this. This'll put life and sense into you. Haven't I told you, *over and over again* — Aren't your children a testimony to our love? But there! It's cruel to argue with an invalid. I shall send Maud to talk sense to you."

"No, stay with me. I want to be with you every minute of the life that remains to me."

They pass through the Suez Canal, but she is insensible mostly now to changes of scenery or to noises, or to anything but the absence of Roger from her side. The fresh breezes of the Mediterranean cause a revival of mentality. "My poor Roger," she says one day when the snow peaks of Crete give hope of an approaching Europe, "*how* grey you have grown! I never noticed it before. Greyer than you ought to be at your age." And she caresses his hair with an emaciated hand. . . .

"Tell Maud — I never see her now, *you* are with me always, but tell Maud I love her better than any one in the world, except you. Better than my children. *They* won't miss me. Africa has always come between us. Still, all the same I send my thanks to Sibyl . . . and poor mother. . . . And tell Mrs. Baines I thought kindly of her . . . I was to blame. . . . But something tells me John has long since understood and forgiven. . . .

"And, Roger? Are you there?" . . .

"Always here, darling." . . .

"Do something for the Miss Calthorps — you know — where I was at school. Some one told me they were in poor circumstances. They must be quite old now."

"They shall be seen to."

The ship passed through the Straits of Messina. Etna behind them on the south-west, with its coronet of snow. Far away to the north-west was the chain of the Lipari Islands, blue pyramids with spectacular columns of yellow-purple smoke issuing from their craters against the approaching sunset. The Tyrrhenian Sea was incarnadine under the level rays of the sinking sun. To the east rose the green and furrowed heights of Aspromonte, green-gold and violet in the light of the sunset, dotted, especially along the sea-base, with

pink-white houses and churches with their campanili like pink fingers pointing upwards. Lucy's eyes gazed their last on this splendid spectacle of earthly beauty. Roger, still holding her hand, lay half across her bed, more haggard than she, unshaven, hollow-cheeked, emaciated with futile blood-letting, worn out with want of sleep and no appetite for eating, and the long vigil over his dying wife. He slept now, soundly. Her eyes gazed at his closed eyelids for one moment; then motion and life passed from them

* * * * *

It was always Maud's function in this sad world to attend to the plain matters of business whilst others gave way to a grief that knew no solace, or a joy that spurned formalities. So it was she who left the ship at Naples, called on Roger's old friend, Ted Parsons, the Consul-General, sent telegrams in all the necessary directions, and fulfilled all necessary forms and ceremonies. Whether it was an unusual concession or not, it was at once agreed that the body of Mrs. Brentham, enclosed in a "shell"— they obtained what was necessary from Naples — should be carried on with her grief-distraught husband and her husband's sister to Southampton. There all three of them were landed, and thence they proceeded in a very humdrum way by South-Western and Great-Western railways to Reading, where the two live ones put up at an hotel so commonplace and out of date that it momentarily wiped up sentiment and froze the tears in their tear-glands; while poor Lucy's remains were temporarily lodged in a kind of *Chapelle ardente* used by the chief undertaker, who did things in style. No sign of life from Sibyl. Evidently there was no one at home at Engledene. Lucy's parents and Lucy's children were communicated with, and in due course the funeral took place at Aldermaston. Roger even sent word of it — remembering Lucy's message — to Mrs. Baines at

Theale; and to the intense surprise of every one in the neighbourhood Mrs. Baines stalked into the church and churchyard, attended the burial, and then strode away to the station, and so back to Theale, refusing hospitality at Church Farm by a simple shake of the gaunt grey head, down the cheeks of which, however, a tear or two had trickled.

Lucy came to rest at last in the churchyard of Aldermaston, under the boughs of one of those superb blue cedars of the Park which lean out over the walls of mellow brick. She had so admired these cedars in her dawning sense of beauty when she taught in the neighbouring school; and when she was wont to pace up and down the Mortimer Road considering whether or not she should go out to Africa to marry John Baines.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE END OF SIBYL

FOR three weeks after Lucy's burial, Roger scarcely knew what he did or whom he saw. His boys and girls went back to school and college; Maud busied herself in reconnoitring for a home, some place not too expensive to keep up, where the children might come in school holidays, where Roger might find rest, isolation, the healing power of country life when he was wearied with towns and travel. She designed to acquire for him and her the old Vicarage at Farleigh Wallop. The Vicar who had succeeded their father, instead of being an archæologist, to whom present-day life was a wearisome fact that must obtrude itself as little as possible on his studies, liked to reside where the population was thickest. Of the two villages, therefore, within his cure of souls he chose Cliddesden for his residence as being the more populous, and let the vicarage at Farleigh whenever he could find a tenant. This of course was the old home of the Brenthams and the place where Maud had lived up to the time of her father's death. She had no inquiries to make as to drainage or water. She knew its charms and its weaknesses; and finding it untenanted she soon concluded an agreement with the Vicar to take it on a reasonable rent and with some security of tenure. To live there once more would be for her and Roger — and for Maurice too, and Geoffrey when he chose to come and see them — a pleasant linking-up of past with present.

Meantime, Roger returned from three weeks of aimless wanderings on a bicycle or in a motor, and from

visits to bankers, tailors, and the Foreign Office in London, to spend a few days with Maurice at Englefield Lodge.

The first question he put to his brother was, "Where *on earth* is Sibyl?"

Maurice: "I didn't like to tell you before, Sibyl is rather under the weather, as Geoffrey would say. Silchester — Clithy, as she always will call him — came of age last year, as you know. Sibyl seemed a bit off colour then, and began really to look somewhere near her age — at last. But she carried off things well. Gave fêtes on all the different properties and attended most of them. . . . Gave political dinner parties in London to introduce her son to such great pots as she could get to come to them, before he took his seat in the House of Lords. She was present at the Trustees' meetings to give an account of her stewardship. They congratulated her — and me — and you, in retrospect — on the way in which the Estate had been managed during the long minority; and told Master Clithy he was remarkably lucky to have such a mother and such Agents. He took it all with a certain amount of pompous acquiescence. . . . He has grown into an awful prig, you will find, and thinks a tremendous lot of himself. Whether I shall stay on with him I hardly know. I've saved a bit, haven't spent any of my share in Dad's money, and I could always go back to the Bar. P'raps if you returned to Africa I'd go with you if you'd let me? I'm rather fed up with England and office work. . . .

"However, about Sib. . . . She came down here last summer and *didn't* have a house party. Lived quite alone with your kids. They've come to look upon Engledene as quite their home. Of course when she couldn't put 'em up I had them here. Well, as I say, she seemed 'under the weather.' Once or twice when I rather bounced in on Estate business, I thought she'd

been crying. Wasn't my business to ask what for. She wasn't an easy person to question and could lay you out with her tongue if you seemed to be meddling with what didn't concern you. Then all at once last October I had a note from her to say that she had gone into a nursing home to have an operation, that I wasn't to fuss about it or come to inquire, that if she was away at Christmas time your children were to come here from school just the same and I was to represent her as host. . . ."

Roger: "What was the operation for? All this is news to me."

Maurice: "So I guessed. She made me promise not to write and tell you or Lucy . . . said it would be all over, long before you were back, and turn out to be a fuss about nothing. As to what it *was,* why I suppose she had reached a certain stage in life when most women have complications and ten per cent. of 'em are operated on — glands, cysts, tumours. . . .

"The operation took place — she was jolly careful to keep it out of the papers — I doubt if even Clithy knew anything till it was well over. He was travelling in Russia to study the Russian theatres and their arrangements about scenery. . . . After she recovered the doctors sent her to Aix and then to St. Tropez on the Riviera. . . . Clithy joined her there. I sent her the telegram about . . . about . . . Lucy's death. I dare say you noticed the perfectly magnificent wreaths they both sent for the funeral. Clithy's came down from some place in Regent Street and had a card on it 'To my dear Aunt Lucy.' . . . Only human touch about him . . . awfully fond of your wife . . . always said he liked her much more than his mother. . . . But he needn't have said it so often, though Sibyl only used to laugh. Her wreath was made here from the very best things we had got in the hot-houses . . . only because Sibyl wrote that Lucy so loved to walk

in these houses and fancy she was back in Africa. . . . However, I had a letter from her three days ago. . . ." (Takes it out and reads: "Tell Roger not to dream of coming out here, because I am just going away. I am writing him in a few days.") "There! Now she'll soon tell you everything about herself. . . .

"What about *you?* Have you made any plans as yet?"

Roger: "Lucy's death has cut my life in two; I shall have to alter all the programme we used to plan out together, she and I and Maud. Of course there are the children to think about. . . . Where are the matches? I'll light a pipe and tell you my ideas. . . ." (A silence . . . puffs . . .) . . . "I've not done badly out of this Happy Valley Concession. I've sold my shares in it — all but five hundred, kept *them* just to retain an interest, don't you know, get the Company's reports from time to time — I've sold my shares at two pounds a share to the Schräders' group. That brings me in close upon £75,000. I haven't saved much besides . . . purposely lived well out there and entertained a good deal, and gave . . . Lucy . . . and Maud all they wanted, and had to pay for the little 'uns' schooling at home. However, there I am at this moment with about £75,000 at my bank on deposit and twelve hundred or so outstanding to my current account. . . . I'm going first of all to give ten thousand pounds *down* to Maud. I consider she has *earned* it.

"And then I must make a new will . . . and I want to ask you, old chap, to be one of the executors. Will you? And p'raps Geoff the other. After all, it isn't Geoff we dislike, it's that confounded, pious doe-rabbit of a wife of his. However . . . . .

"Well then, about my plans. I suppose I ought to stay at home at Farleigh — I shall look out for a decent flat in London — and get to know my children. Some-

how it's *that* I can't take to. They have grown up so outside all my thoughts and schemes and interests. They don't care a hang about Africa. John has been making a young fool of himself at Sandhurst . . . been betting and borrowing and getting into debt. I'm glad his mother didn't know. . . . Well, I shall square up all that, but I shall insist on his going in for the Indian Army — Staff Corps — same as I did. . . . A man if he's got ability couldn't have a better education. . . . He's a good-looking boy, John — I expect he thinks me an old fogey from the backwoods. . . . India's the school for him. And as to Ambrose, he must go to Cambridge, when he leaves Harrow, and I shall try and get him a nomination for the Consular Service. . . . That's the other good school for a British citizen. You'll think me jolly conceited, just because those are the two careers *I've* followed. But . . ." (smokes and puffs).

" Well then, there are the two girls. Fat Maud — she was furious because I revived the old name — says long ago ' Aunt Sibyl ' agreed it should be compromised by her being called Fatima. . . . Fatima, I gather, is eighteen, and young Sibyl is fourteen. . . . For the present Maud will look after them, and I shall have 'em up to London every now and then for a few weeks. In course of time I suppose they'll want to be presented. Dare say old Sibyl will do that, or if she's away, Lady Dewburn. By the bye, *she* wrote me an awfully sweet letter about Lucy . . ." (ponders and smokes).

" In due time the girls'll marry, and if they pick up the right kind of husband I shall give 'em each a portion of my ill-gotten wealth. There! That's what I've planned out, and I dare say it 'ud ha' been quite different if my darling Luce had lived. I should have been reconciled then to settling down at home. As it

is — I shall travel a bit — Go to Germany and try to find out what the Germans are up to. . . . Go back to Africa p'raps . . . *I* don't know. . . ."

A few days after this conversation, Roger received a letter from Sibyl:

Villa les Pins,
Grimaud, près St. Tropez,
Var,
June 12, 1909.

DEAR ROGER,—

Maurice will have given you all the news there is about me, except what I am going to add in this letter.

I am not going to attempt any sympathy at present over your loss. Maud's telegram from Naples was forwarded on to me here and it gave me a horrid turn. I often used to tease Lucy: I am cat-scratchy to every one, I fear. Why? *I* don't know: something to do with my internal organs, I dare say. But I became sincerely fond of her, after being perfectly horrid to her when we first met. She seemed to grow on one. I should have liked her always to stay at Englefield.

Heigh ho! I am very much inclined to whimper about myself. I have been through a *ghastly* time. . . . Some day, if I live, I will tell you. Meantime, though I am *aching* to see you I am going to postpone that happiness, and instead am going round the world with Vicky Masham.

The doctors seem to think — I dare say it is only because they have nothing else to suggest — that if I went on a long sea voyage for about a year — I mean, kept constantly travelling on the sea — I should get quite strong again. Perhaps I shall. I want to give myself every chance — it seems *so stupid* to die before you're seventy. Also it occurred to me the other day that for a woman to have raved for twenty years about

the British Empire and yet never to have seen any part of it outside Great Britain, except Cape Town and Stellenbosch, and once when we went to Jersey from Dinant — was rather silly. So Vicky and I are starting from Marseilles next Sunday in a P. and O., bound for Ceylon, and after that Japan. Not that Japan is British — I believe — but of course we aren't going to be pedantic. Then I suppose we shall "do" Australia and New Zealand — only I'm afraid New Zealand is rather muttony, isn't it? Excessively worthy and all that, but lives chiefly on mutton and stewed tea. However, there are geysers and pink terraces, if you look for them. Then there will be a lovely cruise across the Pacific, and beach-combers and impossibly large oysters that would dine a family of six, and brown people with no morals and beautiful sinuous forms, and finally San Francisco and California. After that — however, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. Vicky or I will bombard you with picture post-cards recording our progress, and when — and when I'm *quite* well and look less like a doomed woman — I will let you know, and, dearest Roger, we will pass the rest of our lives together, or at least not far away from one another. Your children shall be the children of my old age. . . .

Clithy is here, but as soon as I leave for Marseilles he is off again to Russia. He has promised me to look you up when he returns. You will find him now definitely fixed as to appearance. People of his stamp are like that. Between nineteen and twenty-one, they quite quickly assume the figure, face, style by which they are ever after going to be known. He will remind you most of Lord R——, though I assure you there is no innuendo in this. I dare say the L——'s are distant cousins of the Mallards. But Clithy is essentially the aristocratic young peer who may be a fount of wisdom or a hollow fraud with nothing inside an irreproach-

able exterior. He is a mystery to me. And I am of little interest to him. The only woman I ever heard him mention with anything like a kind look in his eyes was Lucy. The Anne of Denmark nose is still there, undulating and with a bump in the middle; but the rest of the face has grown up more and his hair is a nice dark chestnut brown.— Well, you will see him later, so why waste time in describing him?

As to Vicky Masham. . . . Of course you want to know why, etc.

Well: Vicky, at the death of her patron saint, Victoria the Good, was left with little more than her pension of £500 a year. She ought to have had ten thousand pounds of her own, but — I dare say you saw the scandal in the papers? She and her sisters gave up much of their means to save their shockingly bad brother from going to prison over some swindle that . . . Again why waste words? Maurice could tell you all about it. Well, when I came to the South of France after Aix, last December, I was *dreadfully* hipped, fighting a certain Terror — a much *worse* terror than the one you used to write to me about who lived in a Red Crater (rather a distinguished address: "The Red Crater, Iraku"), and who went to Hell by the direct route. I came to Monte Carlo amongst other places and thought if I kept on a veil and wore blue glasses no one would recognize me. In the Rooms I saw Victoria Masham, looking very melancholy — and oh, *so* old — and quite alone. My heart was touched, I spoke to her and we went to sit on the terrace. I told her my troubles and she told me hers. Result: I struck a bargain. She is to live with me till we have our first quarrel; I am to board her, lodge her, wash her, pay all possible expenses, and give her a little pocket money, over and above. And d'you know, I think it's going to be quite a success! We haven't had a quarrel yet! I've had her teeth beautifully done by

an American dentist at Cannes, so my nickname only applies a little — he was too clever not to give the new set a soupçon of horsiness. And I've made her buy a quite wonderful ".transformation "— chez Nicole — reddish-brown, streaked with grey.— You'd never guess. She has plumped out a good deal, for although I've a wretched appetite myself I keep a good table, and upon my word when we get to the Colonies I shouldn't wonder if she had shoals of proposals. She never talks about anything but Queen Victoria, but I find that — somehow — awfully soothing — takes me back to the happy old time when I was a care-free girl, proud of my secret engagement to you.

* * * * *

Dear Roger. I have lost *all* my good looks. That's why I don't want you to see me till I recover them — a little. Meantime, dearest of friends and cousins, if you believe in *Anything* with a power to save — alas! *I* don't — pray to it to save me from this terror that hangs over me — especially in the silent watches of the night — and bring me back safe from my world-tour, with at least another ten years of life before me.

Whilst I am away, remember Engledene is entirely at your children's disposal. I have written to the head gardener to see that fresh flowers are sent every now and again to Lucy's grave. You will tell him when? Lucy was a *real good sort* and I think she came to understand me and forgive. . . .

Ever yours,
SIBYL.

Roger spent the remainder of 1909 as he had planned: looking after his boys and girls to some extent, trying to get interested in his children. The girls bored him with their chatter of surface things: school quarrels and rivalries, school friendships, school mistresses; their individual tastes in chocolate creams and

caramels; their school sports; the actors whom they adored — at a distance — and whose photographs they collected; their disdain for those silly asses the Suffragettes — *they* themselves would *never* want a vote! The two boys were not much less shallow with their Sandhurst and school-boy slang — "top-hole, sir," "ripping," "ruddy," "rotters," "we rotted 'em a bit" — their school-boy games of such vast importance; their dislike of anything sincere, original, warm-hearted; their rash criticisms of great writers, frantic admiration for great sportsmen, religious reverence for cut and colour, style and form; enthusiasm in general for things that did not matter and contempt for things that did.

Was *he* like that at their age? Had Sibyl the elder at sixteen been such a goose as Sibyl the younger? Was it the hollow falsity of a classical education, the dreary sham of School Christianity which had made his boys so cynical, so coarse in their tastes? His children were good to look at, handsome, healthy, physically well-bred. But weren't they — weren't their contemporaries a bit heartless? These in particular had forgotten their mother completely. Yet surely they might have remembered Lucy's unceasing tenderness and the many sacrifices of health and convenience she had made for them?

In the press of that day and in the books and plays most in vogue you were supposed to make everything give way to the pleasures, needs, caprices, expectations of the young, of the coming generation. But why had no author the courage to point out the lack of interest which youth under twenty-one possessed for most persons of matured mind? Girls of eighteen wrote novels entirely without experience and direct observation of life, merely based on their wishy-washy recollections of books written by "grown-ups"; boys of eighteen published sardonic poems and green-cheese essays for

which they ought to have been birched, not boomed. How infinitely preferable to Roger, when he put his secret thoughts into words, was the society of middle-aged friends and relations of his own period in life, who really had brain convolutions moulded by sad and joyous, sharp and unusual experience.

Aunt Maud said there was something evidently very wrong with his liver, and his sons and daughters in an interchange of eye-glances gave a tacit assent. They had felt (though they had never dared to say so in his hearing) a tiny bit ashamed of their ineffective mother. Wasn't it rather *infra dig.* to have been a school-teacher and a missionary? But of their father they all stood in awe, because he was considered in his time a handsome man, was now of distinguished appearance, and was respected in the best circles as an explorer, a big-game shot, a naturalist, and a man who had made some part of Africa pay. But if he stooped to their level and attempted to justify this eminence by talking technically on African subjects or on home problems they soon showed they thought him a bore.

Aunt Sibyl they spoke of warmly, and wailed over the illness which kept her absent from their circle. She was their ideal of a modern great lady. Her cynical speeches appealed to their own lack of convictions; there was nothing " soppy " about Aunt Sibyl.

So Roger escaped whenever he could from his home circle and travelled in Germany, France, Holland, Italy, in order to study the game of foreign politics, find out why in most people's light-hearted opinion a great war was " inevitable " as a solution of conflicting ambitions, and whether it might not be possible to avert it completely if only Britain, Germany, the United States and France could form a League for the maintenance of peace.

The Schräders made much of him in Germany. Rather timidly they stood up against Potsdam, tried

to create an opinion in the South German States — their Alsatian origin carried them in that direction — favourable to a Naval and Colonial understanding with Britain. At their instigation Roger gave a series of addresses in western and southern Germany in 1910 which were deemed a great success, though they were rather frowned on in Berlin. He promised to renew his visit and his lectures in the autumn of 1911.

Meanwhile, Sibyl had returned to London in the early autumn of 1910. It was of course the dead season, but it gradually dawned on Society that she intended to entertain no more. She was probably going to write a book about the British Empire; she had turned quite serious, others said, and was going in for religion. She had evidently lost her health and — no doubt — her appearance.

Roger had hastened to greet her in the much shut-up house in Carlton House Terrace. Here she sat, generally with her back to the light. He was prepared to find her greatly altered. What struck him most was the pathetic thinness of face and hands, and the shapelessness of the figure. The new fashions in dress — straight up and down, no waist, one of the greatest revolutions of our age — helped her here, but at the expense of womanly charm. For Roger had the old-fashioned man-mind which has for some twenty thousand years — did it not begin in Aurignacian times? — admired the incurve below the well-furnished female bust and the outcurve from waist to hip.

" I'm glad you came so promptly," said Sibyl, " because I'm turning out of this gloomy mansion and surrendering it to Clithy. I simply can't afford to keep it up *and* Engledene too, and although he says of course he will pay for everything and I can have my own suite of rooms, I somehow fancy a cosy little flat which I could share with Maud, or Vicky Masham when she comes back from the States. . . . Yes, I left

her at Washington, going to stay at the White House. I came back alone from there, but I had sulky Sophie to look after me. One thing that makes me think, Roger, that I am *really* ill, really doomed, is that Sophie no longer gives me notice whenever any whim of mine displeases her. I am sure she is saying to herself now, 'The poor old gal won't be with us much longer: better hang on with her and then she may leave me something.' But about Vicky, for it really *is* a good story. . . . Only first I'm going to — or you might — ring for tea. Of course you'll stay? You couldn't in decency refuse.— Do you know, we haven't set eyes on one another for . . . for . . . *three years?* We are both swallowing pungent things we might say about one another's appearance, and both resolving to bite our tongues off rather than say them." . . . (To servant: "Tea please; and ask Miss Mills to make the sandwiches, *my* sandwiches, I mean.") . . . "I have to take these frame-foods in the form of sandwiches, and Sophie has learnt the art of making them so seductive that I get them down without any difficulty. . . .

"About Vicky.— Do draw up your chair; you needn't be so frigid with a moribund friend. Directly it became known in California that Vicky had been a maid of honour to the late Queen Victoria, my dear, the Americans nearly killed us with kindness! Our rôles were reversed. *She* was the lady of distinction and *I* was her travelling companion. You know the Americans, especially in the west and east, have a *culte* for Queen Victoria, and Vicky's stories of her home life held them spell-bound. She felt in her position it wouldn't be right to *lecture publicly* on her late mistress, but the difficulty was got over.— D'you still drink tea without sugar? I'm told I *ought* to take it — got over by drawing-room meetings, tickets subscribed for, and no charge at the door, a sumptuous tea — sup-

posed to be modelled on the kind of tea the Queen took at Osborne — served in the middle of Vicky's talk. She refused to take any direct payment, so they sent her *thumping* cheques for her travelling expenses. And now she's going to put her talks on Queen Victoria as Mother, Wife and Queen into a book.— One way and another, she'll make five or six thousand pounds out of the whole business. And I'm *jolly* glad. It'll be some provision for her real old age, after I'm gone — for I shan't have much to leave, and most of that I must give to my sisters in the Colonies and to your Sibyl, and some of my servants. . . .

"Now: you've got *endless* things to tell *me*. Indeed I really can't see why we should be separated, now, except when we are put to bed. You must be a mental wreck, and I am a physical one. . . . I got frightfully tired in the States — it spoilt much of the good I derived from the long steamer voyages. . . . We are simply two imprisoned souls in very battered cages. All the gilding is off mine."

Roger saw as much of Lady Silchester as he could during the last months of 1910. He and Maud assisted her to find just the right sort of flat, where she would have no household worries, where, in fact, she need only keep Sophie to look after her. They all spent a reasonably merry Christmas at Engledene, where Lord Silchester joined them, and where Fatima — Maud junior — expressed and perhaps felt such an intense interest in his Keltic operas and reforms in stage scenery that a glint of the match-maker's eagerness came into Sibyl's tired eyes; she pressed Roger's hand and murmured, "*Wouldn't* it be *too* delightful . . .?"

During the first half of 1911 the Intelligence Division of the War Office discovered Major Brentham as a really great authority on African geography and African campaigns, and he worked there over maps and

gave them in addition much other information. As some return he was gazetted Colonel, and again there was talk of utilizing such an administrative capacity in our own dominions.

In June, 1911, Sibyl's physician and surgeon were not altogether satisfied as to her progress towards recovery, and suggested she might derive great benefit from the waters of Villette, a thermal station in the east of France near the Vosges. So she said to Roger: "*You look* quite as ill as I *feel*. It's malaria. You never quite got rid of that blackwater fever. Come to Villette later on. Maud and the girls and Clithy could join us too. I'll have a month first of all, alone except for Vicky. I'll give the closest attention to the cure, and then perhaps when you arrive I may be able to sit up and take notice and even do a little motoring. . . ."

Accordingly the scene of this dwindling story changes in Villette-ès-Vosges, a *Ville d'eaux* in eastern France, in the month of August and September, 1911. Germany has spoilt the summer for all statesmen, soldiers and sailors by challenging the French protectorate of Morocco at Agadir. It is supposed by the middle of August, after Mr. Lloyd George's speech in the City, and after a succession of "kraches" in German banking firms, that the Kaiser's Government is hesitating to go the full length of War: but Germany is growling horribly because she is realizing that her financial arrangements for a war of great dimensions are imperfect, and that she is unprepared with aircraft to cope with the French aeroplanes.

So she is consenting to *pourparlers* for the purpose of ascertaining the terms on which she may be bought off, persuaded to leave Agadir, and withdraw a portion of the army she is crowding into Alsace-Lorraine.

Villette-ès-Vosges is well suited for the work of the

old diplomacy. It is, to begin with, a *Ville d'eaux;* and in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, statesmen who were negotiating treaties and alliances or resolving problems which threatened war, usually met at some gay place near their frontiers where they could, under the guise of "taking the waters," carry on their conversations with one another and draft protocols of conspiracy or of agreement. Consequently, in late August and early September, 1911, Villette was unusually thronged: not only by its accustomed clientèle of middle-aged invalids trying to combat all manner of diseases for which its springs were efficacious, but also by their *demoiselles-à-marier,* their gawky boys and bread-and-butter, pigtailed girls, playing tennis, croquet, and crowding into the cinemas while their parents sip and bathe and undergo *massage sous l'eau;* by wicked gamblers, obvious adventurers, demure cocottes (needing a month's repose and a reduction of their figures); and by European statesmen trying to look like tourists. The German diplomatists have dressed and hatted themselves to resemble the Frenchman of caricature; the French ministers and ex-ministers are out-doing the average English gentleman in bluff "sports" costumes; and there are Russians and Austrians too quaint for words, *à pouffer de rire,* as Sibyl says; with such weeping whiskers, such forked beards, such frock-coats in the early morning and such tall hats as you never saw, except in pictures of Society in Paris under the Second Empire.

These diplomatists foregather in the theatrically beautiful park with its swan-pools, its canalized river, its groves and bosquets, pavilions, tea-houses, summer-houses, chalets, kiosques of newspapers and salacious novels, open-air orchestras, croquet-lawns, and tennis-courts. Or if the problem is very grave, and excited speech should not be audible nor gesticulations visible

to prowling journalists, they stroll away to the race-course, to the golf links.

It is the glorious summer of 1911, when there was little rain between the beginning of June and the end of September. Nevertheless, if you should weary of the heat or if there should be a sudden shower you have a long cool arcade of tempting shops, a Grand Guignol, and the necessary retreats — on a large scale — for those who are summarily affected by the cathartic action of the waters, especially that very potent *Source Salée,* which is never mentioned without respect, except where it is the foundation of Rabelaisian stories. The medicinal springs are housed in temples of great architectural beauty. The town of pleasure, with its eight or nine hotels, rises in terraces that survey the park — not long ago a forest in which wolves roamed in winter time. New Villette contains a theatre, a *Club des Étrangers* with gambling rooms, a *Salle de lecture,* a Concert Hall, an *Église Anglicane,* and a Catholic church, a post-office, doctors' houses and laboratories, and the necessary *usines* and *garages.* A mile away is the real Villette, a common-place Lorraine town of purely agricultural interests, turning its back, so to speak, on the adjoining health resort which has made its name famous.

In the arcade is a large black notice-board, whereon besides local notices are pinned the *Havas* telegrams. Hither, during one critical week, comes a throng of anxious readers. *Is it to be peace or War?* Will Germany be satisfied with French Congo and give up Morocco? Should we pack to-night and leave before Mother has completed her cure, *in case* mobilization upsets the trains? Will my husband be called up? *What* will happen to my boy?

Sibyl, lying on her comfortably-sloped invalid chair in the verandah of the Pavillon des Déjeuners, opines

the Germans must be *perfect beasts* to upset every one like this, and all over some place on the Sahara coast where there are just a few verminous Moors. She is not in favour of anarchism, but she really *does* wish some one would assassinate the Kaiser. . . .

Roger looks grave and essays the hopeless task of defending Germany. "It is all this mania for 'Empires across the Seas.' Germany gets mad when our Empire, the French Empire, the Russian Empire each year get bigger, while she is prevented everywhere from expanding ——, etc., etc."

Victoria Masham hazards the conjecture: "*If only* the dear Queen were alive! *She* would soon. . . ."

Sibyl interrupts: "My dear Vicky, you *must* look facts in the face. Queen Victoria would now be 92. She would not be of much use at that age . . . See! There is obviously our Foreign Minister . . . disguised with smoked glasses, but you can't mistake his nose. I think he's *so* good-looking. . . . And there is young Hawk of the F.O. He's just been sent to Brussels. I hear the Villierses are expected to-morrow. That man in the straw hat and the cricketing flannels is Monsieur Viviani, and the handsome old lion with the grey mane is Léon Bourgeois. The tight-trousered man you'd take for a 'booky' is Count Palastro — and there's no mistaking that stuffed figure of the last century, in a stove-pipe hat, a buttoned-up frock-coat, and pointed whiskers: that's Polánoff of the Russian Foreign Office. We saw him when we were in Japan. . . . 'Whithersoever the carcass is, there are the eagles gathered together.'"

Rogers "I suppose the carcass is the unhappy peoples of Europe?"

Sibyl: "I suppose so. Vicky, dear. Go and have breakfast at the hotel this morning. D'you mind? Maud has taken off the two girls to some violent sports' competition, and Clithy has motored over to Dom-

rémy." (To Roger): "He is studying local colour for the libretto of an opera on Joan of Arc. His great *clou* — if he can *only* bring it off — is the last scene. Joan of Arc, while bound to the stake and encircled with flames, sings a scena of the fireworks kind. Clithy says it would be natural under the circumstances. He thinks if they can devise some kind of asbestos shift for the prima donna and the usual chemical flames that don't burn much it could be arranged. . . ." (To Vicky): "I want Roger all to myself this morning. We are going to have our breakfast together, here, in case events call him to sterner duties. . . ." (Vicky acquiesces with a good grace — in her new transformation to which a *little* more grey has been added, she looks surprisingly well, and younger than Sibyl, though she is ten years older).

A pause. The waiter lays the table between them for Roger's déjeuner à la fourchette. He is accustomed to preparing Sibyl's special dietary and arranges for that also. He is a pleasant-faced man, deeply deploring "le peu de progrès que fait M'ame la Baronne. . . ."

Sibyl: "What a scene for a dying woman to be looking at!"

Roger: "Sibyl! *Don't* be so lugubrious. . . ."

Sibyl: "Why? Do you suppose I don't pretty well know my own condition? I am dying slowly of cancer, what the doctors call 'un lent dépérissement.' I expect this is what Mother died of later in life. The doctors would be ready enough to operate again if there was any chance. . . . As it is, they know it is more merciful to let me linger out my few remaining weeks or months than submit me to the shock of an operation which might kill me at once. I *may* live to October, Dr. Périgord thinks. Or he puts it more pleasantly: 'Vers le mois d'Octobre nous saurons oui ou non, si la guérison de M'ame la Baronne s'effectuera.

Les eaux de Villette opèrent parfois des miracles: espérons toujours.' . . . And so on. . . . I don't suffer much pain — as yet. When it comes on they'll put me under morphia. I shall stay here till this political crisis is over or the fine weather begins to break. Then Clithy will motor me to Calais and from Dover to Engledene. Engledene will be the best place to die at. And, of course, *remember,* I want to be buried at Aldermaston, near Lucy — and near where you'll be laid some day — unless you marry again, which I should hardly think you'll do. I shall have a perfect right to occupy a small space in Aldermaston churchyard, because I'm a parishioner. I bought the farm that father so ridiculously mismanaged and that you made so prosperous. I've left it in my will to my brother Gerry, as some compensation for having taken no notice of him since I got married. . . . But, as I said before, *what* a scene! Not even your beloved Happy Valley could better those flowers in the urns and vases and borders and parterres — those scarlet geraniums, scarlet cannas, scarlet salvias, and scarlety-crimson Lobelia cardinalis. We grow them at Engledene, but they're nothing like these. *And* the heliotrope, and ageratum . . . and those blue salvias and orange calceolarias. I know it's rather vulgar, but the whole effect is superbly staged; don't you think so? . . . .

"And the women's dresses. Many of them, of course, are mannequins, just showing off for the Paris shops. And then to see pass by all the celebrated if over-rated people you've heard so much about, just as though they were well-made-up supers on the stage. And the music of those alternate orchestras. . . and such African sunlight . . . and . . . *you* next to me. . . ."

Roger: "Look here, if you talk so much I shan't

wonder you get weaker instead of stronger. Eat up your breakfast and drink your milk."

Sibyl: "I will. But I *must* talk to you. I shall soon be silenced for ever. . . ."

Roger: "So shall *I*, when my time comes. So will every one. You don't give yourself a chance, talking in this morbid way. The doctors are often wrong. Remember the case of Lady Waterford?"

Sibyl: "Blanchie?"

Roger: "Yes. . . . A good soaking in Villette water may get rid of all your trouble and some day you may be weeping over me as I lie dying of Bright's disease."

Sibyl (not paying much attention): "Roger! Do you think there is going to be War?"

Roger: "Not this time. Look there! D'you see those *gardes champêtres* in that green uniform?"

Sibyl: "That nice-looking man, with the blond moustaches?"

Roger: "Yes, and that ugly-looking fellow with the red nose. Well: a week ago they mysteriously vanished, and I asked what had become of them. I was told they had joined up . . . the Reserve, you know. Now they're back again. *That* shows the Germans and French have come to terms. The War is *partie remise* — this year — but it's certain to come, unless Germany can be squared. Remains to be seen what she wants and what we can afford to give. . . ."

A pause. Sibyl eats a little food and sips her milk. Roger finishes his breakfast and lights a cigarette.

Sibyl: "Do you think there can be *any* survival after death?"

Roger: "How can *I* tell? Who knows *anything* about it? Not even Edison or Marconi. And they come nearest . . ."

Sibyl: "I mean, of course, our minds, our intelli-

gence, our love. Our poor diseased bodies simply dissolve and are redistributed and worked up again. But the *personality* we have created in our brains?" . . . (takes a cigarette from Roger and smokes it). "Talking of personality, isn't it *extraordinary* how *that* can be affected through our stomachs; chemically, so to speak? You saw that woman in the dark green dress, who waved to me just now? Recognize her?" (Roger shakes his head). . . . "*That* is Cecilia Bosworth, the Marchioness of Bosworth, quite the proudest woman in the Three kingdoms — enough in herself to provoke a middle-class revolution. Her husband's remote ancestor was a by-blow of the Plantagenets, a natural son of 'false fleeting Clarence.' He went over to that usurper — I've always spoken up for Richard the Third — that *usurper,* Henry the Seventh, at the battle of Bosworth, and so was created Earl of Bosworth, and afterwards Elizabeth made his grandson a marquis. Well, even you, as an African hermit, *must* have heard of that woman's insolence in Society? She even mocked at the Royal Family and said her husband — a perfect oaf — was more Plantadge than they were and the rightful king. . . . She wanted Prince Eddy to marry her daughter and make things come right." (A pause . . . smokes). . .

"Well, when she came here six weeks ago, nobody was good enough to mix with her; she went round blighting us all. My doctor said it was all due to liver and he'd soon cure her. He put her on to *La Source Salée* — and a slice of melon afterwards. And, *my dear,* she went through *agonies,* I believe. I used to hear her *shrieking* as she passed along the corridor. . . .

"But it's cured her. See what a pleasant nod she gave me just now? And there she is, talking to those very pretty girls — and their father's only a Leeds manufacturer. . . .

"Well, how do you work *that* problem out?"

Roger: "Give it up! . . . But by the look in your eyes, I should say *you've* got the beginning of a temperature. Let me wheel you back to the Hotel and call for Sophie. Then if you are good and obedient and get an after-breakfast nap, I will come at three and take you and Vicky out for a very gentle motor drive. . . ."

Sibyl submits. The waiter assists with the chair till it is out of the intricacies of the approach to the Breakfast Pavilion. Roger draws it through the gay throng. The church bells of all denominations are clanging in carillons, either because it is Sunday or because Peace — this time — has been definitely assured by an exchange of signatures. A few people raise their hats or wave hands to Sibyl, though she is semi-disguised in smoked glasses and a diaphanous veil; and numerous men nod to Colonel Brentham: who, panting, draws the wheeled chair up to the perron of the hotel.

Here there is a pause while Sophie is sent for. Then the disentanglement of the sick woman from the chair and from shawls, and her slow walk, supported by Roger and her maid, to the ground floor rooms where a white-capped nurse receives her.

Roger went to Germany at the end of September, when Sibyl was being taken back to England by her son. He spent six weeks lecturing the Germans on the advisability of joining Britain and France in a world-wide understanding. His lectures were politely forbidden on Prussian territory, which made South Germany all the more eager to hear him. And when he left for England at the beginning of November, it was with the assurance that a German representative deputation would come to England in the spring of 1912 to promote an Anglo-German understanding.

On reaching London, however, he learnt that Sibyl

had died two days previously, at Engledene. In the last weeks of her agony she had been much under morphia. Before she reached that stage she had insisted with Maud and Vicky that Roger was *not* to be bothered by bad reports of her condition, as he was engaged in doing what he believed to be the right thing.

CHAPTER XXIV

ALL ENDS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY

COLONEL BRENTHAM'S anticipations of the Millennium to be achieved by the adjustment of colonial ambitions were not to be realized. On the 28th of June, 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne was assassinated in the Bosnian capital. Maurice Brentham, meeting his brother the same day outside the Travellers' Club, asked what he thought of this bolt from the blue.

"I think very badly of it," Roger replied. "Whether or not the plot was engineered in Servia, it is clear from the sayings and antics of the Russian minister in Belgrade that Russia is egging on Servia against Austria and using her as a mask under which Russia may place herself athwart German-Austrian ambitions in the Balkan peninsula, and bar the way to Constantinople. She is, in fact, challenging directly the substantial results of our agreements. . . ."

"Well, and if she does, what will happen then?"

"The Great War we have been striving to avert."

When War was declared on August 4th, Brentham found himself in the dilemma of many of his able-bodied, disengaged fellow-countrymen: what service could he render to the British Empire at this crisis of its fate? Like most of us he had a strong predilection as to the kind of service he might best render. In his case it was to proceed as quickly as possible to East Africa and watch over the fortunes of the Happy Valley. John was already in India with his regiment; Ambrose had best remain at Cambridge unless there

was anything like Universal service; Maud would take up hospital work and her nieces could help her.

He therefore proceeded to offer his services to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. If Africa could not be kept out of the War area — as he had at first hoped — then, if we did not occupy German East Africa, the Germans would soon proceed to invade our adjacent possessions: in short, a terrible struggle was about to take place for supremacy in the Dark Continent between Britain, France, and Belgium on the one side and Germany on the other. In such a struggle, surely his qualities as geographer, linguist, and a person of great local influence ought to be of value in the East African campaign?

The Colonial Office replied coldly that it had handed over the whole question of attack and defence in East Africa to the War Office. To the War Office he therefore repaired one very warm day at the end of August. With the greatest difficulty he obtained access to the Secretary of State for War, then the most powerful person in the kingdom. He faced those "desert eyes" like the optics of a harpy eagle, and made a stammering, voluble proffer of his services, which gradually slackened under the stare and the silence. When he paused to invite a reply, the great man interjected: "How old are you?"

"Fifty-six, Sir."

"*Much* too old. . . . Couldn't stand . . . strain of campaign. . . . Besides . . . all arranged with Indian War Department. . . . They mightn't like their Intelligence Division . . . interfered with. . . . No doubt contingency long foreseen . . . plan of campaign cut-and-dried. . . . Sorry. . . . We must make use of you elsewhere. . . . Send you America . . . or recruiting, p'raps. . . . Scotland, Ireland, Canada. Let you know later. . . . Good morning. . . ."

Roger, fearful of being caught in the machine as some little wheel or cog of no importance, lay low, considered, inquired and made his plans, thinking of nothing but how to reach and save the Happy Valley. Passports and visas were still matters of trifling importance. The direct route to East Africa was closed to him; fighting had already begun, rather disastrously for the British. But the Belgians were preparing for a great war-effort against German East Africa. Roger made his way to Antwerp . . . saw the Belgian Minister for the Congo, saw the grave and courteous young King . . . was given permission to accompany the Belgian forces assembling on Tanganyika. . . .

Then: picture him having reached the mouth of the Congo, late on in 1914 . . . a little rusty for this adventure in Equatorial Africa. No one with him as assistant, servant, valet. His son John had been as far back as the preceding July marked down for service with the first Indian contingent which would in case of war be dispatched across the Indian Ocean to take part in the mismanaged attack on Tanga. Can you picture Brentham in those dreary weeks of waiting at Boma, the Congo capital — hothouse heat, mosquitoes, sand, dense forest, rancid smell of palm oil — unutterably lonely, asking himself torturingly "whether he had done the right thing"? Ought he not to have stayed at home, fought in Flanders? Looked after Ambrose, waited for orders from Lord Kitchener? Was he absolutely single-minded in his attachment to the Happy Valley? Had he chosen the right way to get there quickest?

At last they were off up-river to take the train to Stanley Pool. The Belgian officers with whom he travelled were one and all nice fellows, *bons compagnons,* intelligent, respectful of this grave English colonel's knowledge of Africa; but a little puzzled *quand même* at his Quixotry, a little reserved. "Il

paraît qu'il a vécu longtemps avec les Boches," he overheard one of them saying in the mess, as he was sauntering in. It seemed to convey a doubt as to his good faith. . . . At Léopoldville, he encountered a stately-looking Negro in a familiar costume — long white *kanzu,* small white open-work skull-cap — speaking in Swahili. With what joy he recognized that once familiar tongue can only be appreciated by those who have known the nostalgia of East Africa. He addressed the man in Kiswahili and was greeted with respect and interest. A bargain was struck with his employer, and the man, Omari bin Brahimu, originally a boy recruit for Stanley, entered Brentham's service, to accompany him to East Africa. Half the misery of the adventure was now over. Here was a potential nurse in sickness, an efficient valet, a packer, steward, if-need-be cook, gun-bearer, counsellor, interpreter, and ever present help in trouble. . . .

Colonel Brentham soon showed the Belgians he was not there as an encumbrance, as a tiresome elderly guest. His knowledge of Bantu tongues enabled him to pick up a smattering of Bangala, the *lingua franca* of the Congolese soldiery. He worked in his shirt-sleeves and in football shorts at every emergency, knew something about steamer engines, shot for the pot, drilled recruits, and evidently knew the Germans' position and resources thoroughly. By the time the swelling contingent of reinforcements had reached Stanley Falls he was voted the nicest Englishman — *point de morgue, simple et instruit, bon garçon jusqu'au bout des ongles* — they had ever met. Between Stanley Falls and Tanganyika he was very ill and nearly died of black-water fever; but pulled through, thanks to Omari's nursing, and reached Ujiji a yellow spectre, after the Belgians had in several actions on the lake and on shore gained possession of Tanganyika. They had been marvellously helped by a naval contingent

sent out by the British Admiralty through Nyasaland. It was a joy which conduced to Brentham's recovery to meet the brave, jolly, resourceful British naval officers and picked seamen. In some way it righted his own position. He felt less a lonely Don Quixote, a solitary specimen of the British allies of Belgium.

The year 1915 had been the nadir of his life. Cut off from all news — he was not to know for another year that his sons were both dead, John, shot through the head in a maize plantation outside Tanga, and Ambrose, who had enlisted a month after his father's departure, blown to pieces by a shell at Ypres; not to know how his sister and his daughters were faring; whether the British Empire still stood firm, and what people said or thought about his own disappearance. He was often sick, tired, lonely, with little to read, and his thoughts a torture to him; for they dwelt on the remembering of happier things. He wished at times he might have in humdrum daily life the delusions that came to him in dreams or in attacks of fever; that Lucy was once more by his side, that Sibyl had sat by him, that Maud or Maurice or Mrs. Stott had come into his wretched palm-leaf hut.

From Ujiji to Tabora he fought alongside the Belgian Negro army, feeling every step he took eastward more and more at home. He nearly cried with joy at finding himself once more among the Wanyamwezi and actually recognizing among those who came forward to offer their services against the Germans a few of the men who had been his soldier-porters in bygone days.

At Tabora he heard disquieting news about the Happy Valley. It was reported that the British-Boer army under General Smuts, which had already taken the southern slopes of Kilimanjaro from the Germans, was about to start — had started, in fact — on a bold diversion. Led by one or two English sportsmen, they

were evidently making for Lake Manyara and the Happy Valley, with the intention of cutting the Tanganyika railway in Ugogo and outflanking the German forces in the coast-belt. It was a bold scheme that only a great general would have thought of. The story, he thought, must be true. The stroke was imposed on our strategy by the geography of the country. . . . .

After days and nights of meditation and many discussions with Wanyamwezi headmen, guides, and disarmed Askari (who had transferred their allegiance from the Germans to the Allies with the greatest willingness), Brentham sought the general commanding the Belgian forces at Tabora and expounded his plan and the reasons for his plan.

Sanction was obtained. Duly furnished with papers establishing his identity and his position as an intelligence officer serving with the Belgian forces, Roger started at the head of a hundred picked Wanyamwezi, with as little baggage as possible. He felt now primed for any hardship, any privation, when a certain number of days' marching would bring him back "home," as he instinctively framed it in his mind. Nevertheless, in case strength should give out he purchased two donkeys for himself and Omari, who now chiefly filled the rôle of cook, and therefore must not be walked off his legs.

Then they plunged into the untracked wilderness, the least known part of German East Africa, between northern Unyamwezi and the crater region at the head of Lake Manyara, where the British forces would probably impinge on the Happy Valley. Oh, that he might arrive there in time to prevent the accidental or needless destruction of priceless experimental machinery, and the outcome of researches undertaken in the general interests of the world; and intervene possibly between the harmless, bewildered natives and a soldiery which

might not understand them! At first his caravan travelled thirty miles a day in a swinging stride through a cultivated country, a country of good roads, rest-houses and ordered prosperity. Thence it passed north-east and east into a trackless, little-populated region, a no-man's land, illimitable plains and tablelands of thin grass, dotted at rare intervals with granite boulders, blocks and upright *menhirs* of naked stone, as yet the undeciphered hieroglyphics of a chapter in African geology. The dry watercourses sheltered clumps of ragged, lank, thin-stemmed Hyphæne palms, and strange-looking euphorbias. The open country swarmed with game — countless zebras, herds of yellow hartebeest, red-brown impala, black-belted, golden-yellow, white-bellied Grant's gazelle, family parties of twenty or thirty black-and-white and grey ostriches, blue-grey, black-maned gnus (almost as numerous as the zebras), and troops of blotched giraffes like runaway telegraph poles as they fled with uniform trot before his expedition. Rhinoceroses, larger than any Roger had ever beheld, charged his caravan, but more as an idle sport than with malign intent. . . . "What a pity," thought Roger, after successful evasions of these snorting bulks, "we could not domesticate these monsters and turn their strength to account in warfare? A rhino cavalry regiment would carry away all the enemy's wire entanglements and prove as useful as armoured cars."

Only stopping an hour here and an hour there to secure meat for his caravan or incidentally to give some too persistent rhino its quietus, he pressed on till his expedition entered country covered by his recollections — the basin of a former vast sheet of water, ancillary, perhaps, to the Victoria Nyanza, now reduced to the furrowed courses of half-dry rivers and a long salt lake, its shores and portions of its surface sparkling with salt crystals in the sunshine, and its surcharged

waters of salts and sodas in solution, a milky blue. There were people in this wilderness of broad valleys and abrupt escarpments, tribes already known to Roger, primitive Bushman-like folk, speaking languages full of clicks, going stark naked, without domestic animals or agriculture, nomad hunters with bows and arrows, straying from the culture of fifty thousand years ago into awakened Africa: where white nations were fighting for predominance with gas and steel, aeroplane and armoured car.

At last he sighted familiar ridges and entered remembered ravines and noble forests, and followed streams of fresh, cold water. There were now visible many signs of the handiwork, the energy of civilized man. At the same time they encountered the first fugitives fleeing from Iraku before the coming of a war so terrible that there was nothing like it in the black man's legends or imagination: flying rafts in the air hurling bombs, the bursting of shells, the leaden hail of machine-gunfire.

Brentham's arrival on the scene coincided with some suspension of hostilities; at any rate, as he hurried forward through the bungalows, factories, and gardens of Wilhelmshöhe, he heard no artillery; nothing more war-like than the occasional popping of a rifle and a few shouts. The roads, however, were thronged with fugitives making for the woods, some of whom greeted him rapturously as the *Bwana-mkubwa* returning to his kingdom, a god emerging from a machine who would set everything right. Many of these stopped in their flight, turned back and followed his men. They even ran alongside his peevish donkey, regardless of its kicks, strove to kiss a disengaged hand, called him by his native names. The pace of the irritated ass became a trot, a canter, now they were on well-made roads. Roger glanced from side to side, saw old buildings he remembered, and new bungalows and fac-

tories he had never seen before. Several were burning. Negro soldiers in British khaki uniforms were either attempting to stay the flames or were frankly pillaging the houses. Several glanced up at him, irresolute. He seemed a British officer of high rank, but not of their regiment; a few saluted; a question put here and there elicited the fact that they understood Swahili.

From them he gathered that a very large British force had reached Lake Manyara from the north-east, from the big snow mountains, guided by several Englishmen, one of whom was called the "Little Terror" (Kicho kidôgô), who had a small army of his own, very fierce men, not in uniform, "washenzi wabaya." [1] That the German men of the Happy Valley had fled before the English to some great German stronghold in the south; but that the "Little Terror" had been told off to search and occupy the country west of the line of march, and he was now engaged in giving the "washenzi" punishment.

Roger, scarcely halting more than a minute here or a minute there to glean this information, rode eastward as rapidly as his tired donkey could be urged to go. The absolutely familiar scenery was not much altered for the lapse of seven years. The roads were even smoother and neater, the hedges of dracæna and scarlet-flowered Erythrina more luxuriant. There were brilliant flower-gardens round the bungalows. There was the Stotts' former Mission station and school. Beside it was a new chapel of florid Gothic architecture.

Dr. Wiese's house and laboratory. He paused, got off the donkey, and entered the front garden. There, to greet him, was Dr. Wiese himself, lying on his back on a bed of scarlet geraniums, dead, in a pool of congealing blood, with a swarm of flies buzzing about his

[1] Wicked savages.

shattered face. He could see a smashed door, a broken verandah post, and strewn papers, glass bottles, odds and ends of things remaining over from a looting of the house. This was too serious an episode to be passed by without investigation. Omari had by this time come up. And not far behind him were the returning refugees and his caravan of soldier-porters. He strode up to the dead man. Yes, it was Wiese, the physician-friend of many years, who had striven so hard to save Lucy from an insidious disease. . . . Shocking . . . to see him like this after seven years! If *only* he had arrived yesterday it might not have happened. He took the shortest cut over flower-beds, past broken-into aviaries, trampled botanic gardens with an infinitude of labels, to the laboratory, whence came a shouting and quarrelling.

In this building there were a few Nyasaland soldiers in khaki and a number of sinister-looking Ruga-ruga, like those who had once been in Stolzenberg's employ. Bottles were being smashed in the search for brandy, strange fumes filled the air, irrevocable damage was doubtless being done. Here and there, thrown on one side whilst they searched for treasure, were heaps of slaughtered turkeys, peafowl, Crowned cranes and guinea-fowl, which the looting soldiery had obtained from the poultry yards and aviaries round about.

Roger, possessed with a fury which transformed him at this stupid destruction, shouted military commands to the men in khaki and in rags. Mechanically they dropped their booty and were silent. Some of the Ruga-ruga recognized him as the *Bwana-mkubwa* who had once reigned here, and had joined the "Wadachi" [1] in investigating the "Terror's" death and disappearance. Cowed by his presence, they obeyed an order to march out of the building and assemble

[1] Germans.

with the soldiers in the public square of Magara, there to await further orders. Revolver in hand, and well backed by his determined-looking Wanyamwezi, he said: "I will shoot any man among you whom I catch looting or destroying." Sullenly they slunk away.

Another mile's ride and here he was before his former home, his mouth and throat dry with apprehension. The formal garden in front of the house was beautifully neat, gay with flowers, in better order even than in his days. Up the pebbled path which led to the verandah and the stone steps he walked with a beating heart. Oh, that he should be seeing it all again; and oh, that Lucy might come out through the French windows with her graceful, rather languid walk, to throw her arms around his neck and say: "Dearest; dear, *dear* Roger; back at last!" Or that even trusty sister, Maud — How was Maud faring? He had heard nothing of her since a letter reached him at Stanley Pool, nearly two years ago . . . those terrible years of silence whilst he traversed Central Africa. . . . .

But at the rumour of his approach it was neither his living sister nor the wraith of his dead wife that emerged from the open doorway: it was the sinister figure of Willowby Patterne: like himself in khaki: thinner, yellower, greyer, wickeder-looking than he had seen him ten or twelve years ago.

"Had a presentiment we should meet here," said Patterne, trying with a hand that shook to fix an insolent eyeglass in a bloodshot eye. "Though no one knew what had become of you since you bolted from England when the war started. No! . . ." (as Roger makes to advance) ". . . Stay where you are, or I shall have you arrested at once, you . . . you . . . German . . . *spy!*" (Roger takes his revolver out of its leather case and sees that it is loaded and ready.)

"Oh? *I've* got a revolver, too. If you make the slightest movement till I tell you to go, and *where* to go, I shall shoot."

At this threat, the general purport of which he understands, Omari bin Brahimu steps in front of his master and produces *his* revolver. Seeing this, Willowby Patterne calls in a rather quavering voice, "Njoôni, watu wangu, upesi; yupo adui! Upesi!"[1] Two men come from the back premises, look from the white devil pacing up and down on the verandah to the figures of Roger and Omari; and then, with a shout of joy, fling themselves on Roger — not to arrest him as Willowby first supposes, and so hesitates to shoot, but to kiss his hand, kneel at his feet, utter incoherent cries of joy, the while Omari keeps his pistol steadily aimed at the "Little Terror." They are two of Brentham's Somali gun-bearers of seven years back, Yusuf Ali and Ashuro.

Willowby, longing to shoot and kill, yet letting I dare not wait upon I would, disquieted that none of his Ruga-ruga obey his frantic whistling, decides to make a bolt of it and rally them and the Nyasaland soldiers, and so make a prompt end of Roger and the Somali traitors. (These men had arrived at his station in Namanga, hangers-on of the large and heterogeneous British force which was seeking a way across the little-known region between Meru and the Happy Valley. They told Patterne they had once been employed in Iraku on the Concession and offered to help him to show the way. Believing they might be useful for his own purposes in laying hands on the things he sought for, he had taken them on; and here they were, saluting his rival and enemy like a demi-god . . . If he only got a chance to get hold of them! *He'd* cut the life out of them with a kiboko! . . . .)

Whilst he hesitated whether to walk down the steps

[1] "Come, my men, quick! Here is the enemy, quick!"

in a dignified way or jump from the rails of the verandah into the flower-beds, his indecision was terminated abruptly. Behind him a woman shrieked, and he felt himself propelled by a vigorous push of stout arms down the stone steps and almost on to the group of Roger, Omari and the two Somalis. These might have laid hold of him, but a German lady, Frau Hildebrandt, impeded their action. She unceremoniously pushed Patterne into a parterre of petunias, whilst she too clasped Roger's hands in a frenzied appeal, a rapturous greeting. "It is Herr Brentham! Ach lieber Gott! Er wird verstehen. He will be our salvation. Ach mein Mann! Ach meine kinder! Hilf! Hilf!"

Patterne rose to his feet, ran over flower-beds, through or over dracæna hedges (since Roger's men blocked the garden gate), out of a tangle of gardens and outhouses, across the green, to the public square and market-place. Here he found groups of bewildered, sulky King's African Rifles, and his own Rugaruga. He had been given an escort of fifty Negro riflemen when, three days before, he had been detailed — at his own request, having finished his job as guide — to "clear up" Iraku and the European settlement of Wilhelmshöhe, professing to know every inch of the ground. He had been told, of course, that unless resistance was offered there was to be no looting; that any German women or children were to be allowed to remain in their homes until they could be officially dealt with, and all German men surrendering to be treated humanely as prisoners of war, and marched under escort to the nearest British camp. These instructions he had chosen to interpret in his own way by killing Dr. Wiese and terrorizing Frau Hildebrandt into finding him the information of which he was in search. He intended, of course, to make himself master of the Concession, in the hope that he might be recognized as owner after the War. There would certainly be sev-

eral years of confusion in which he might rule here and perhaps acquire all the wealth he wanted. . . . .

But the arrival — the resurrection almost — of Roger Brentham had so queered his plans that he saw red. He would assemble all the men he could get hold of and make a sudden rush on Magara House, and shoot, shoot, shoot before Roger's party could put themselves in a position of defence. He would declare Roger to be a traitor and a German Spy. Provided he killed him, the *fait accompli* would not be followed with much of an inquiry at this very critical time. . . .

But his Ruga-ruga were slow to respond, having recognized Roger as a redoubtable warrior. And the Nyasaland regulars flatly refused to march to the attack. Patterne was not one of their regular officers, and they insisted that an English Colonel having taken possession of this country they should all rejoin the main army and lay the case before their commanding officer. So Patterne gathered his loads together, awoke his weary porters (who had taken advantage of the halt to gorge themselves with food after their severe privations) and departed down the Valley in the direction of the rapidly advancing armies. He felt he could not halt or eat or sleep till he had taken vengeance on the man who had so persistently baulked him; he would denounce him as a spy, as a traitor . . . perhaps — oh joy! — get him court-martialled and shot; at any rate, collared and marched out of East Africa.

But he never even reached the head-quarters of the army now entering Irangi. Roger, anticipating his intentions, had rapidly written an account of his actions in turning Patterne out of Magara House, had explained who he was, the route he had followed, and his intention to remain in charge of the Concession till he was ordered to leave it by the proper authority. The Somalis travelling twice as quickly as Patterne's *safari,* and travelling with as much secrecy as speed, delivered

the letter to the nearest British officer in high command. Some say that on the return journey they took a pot shot at Patterne as he was halting to whip some of his laggard porters; others that Patterne was speared in Ufiome by Masai camp-followers of the main army, who had suffered by some of his raids in the past, or who transferred to the "Little Terror" the vendetta they had carried on with his ally, the Big Terror of the Red Crater. In any case, "he perished miserably," as they used to write in pre-Wells histories. He never was heard of again, after he left the Happy Valley. His escort of Nyasaland soldiers quietly rejoined their regiment, then in the thick of fighting at Kondoa-Irangi; and no one cared enough about Sir Willowby Patterne to put any questions. His Ruga-ruga dispersed as plunderers on their own account, till they were rounded up sharply and a few of them shot for looting. The "Little Terror" ceased all at once to terrify, and the baronetcy, after a year's delay and presumption of death, passed to a distant relative, who was the reverend headmaster of a public school.

Roger, meantime, gradually restored the Happy Valley to something of its former peace and quietness. He harboured the Catholic missionaries and the German women and children there till provision could be made for their withdrawal. His proceedings were approved and sanctioned by a Boer General commanding a wing of the British invading army, who by one of those coincidences so common in this incredible war, not only played a great part in conquering German East Africa for the Empire he himself had steadily fought against for three years, but turned out to be the very identical van Rensselaer who had picked up Roger as a prisoner and saved his life in 1900.

As soon as the Happy Valley was brought into telegraphic communication with the coast and with Eng-

land, Roger cabled to his sister his whereabouts and his intentions to remain in the Happy Valley till its political fate was decided. In return he learnt of the death of his two sons, and the fact that his two daughters had felt impelled to marry — Maud ("Fatima"), Lord Silchester, and Sibyl ("Goosey") a wounded officer — without waiting to hear from a father presumably lost in Central Africa.

So Colonel Roger Brentham at the end of the war decided that the England of the Armistice and the Peace and the Reconstruction period was no country for him to live in, with its coal strikes, railway strikes, engineer strikes, police strikes, taxi-drivers' strikes, dockers' strikes, bakers' strikes, stage-hands' strikes and electricians' strikes; its Irish atrocities and reprisals; its futurist art; its paper-strewn highways and byways and beauty-spots; its bottle-throwing chars-à-bancs; man-slaughtering motors; Albert Hall Victory Balls; jazz dances; betting scandals; high prices; and low standards of political morality. Preferable, far, was the Happy Valley, where relations between black, white, and brown were well adjusted, where great wealth was being quietly produced to the proportionate profit of all concerned in the production; where protection was not only accorded to all human beings, but also to all beasts and birds not directly harmful to human interests.

So, after regularizing his position with the Colonial Office and the "enemy" shareholders, he asked his sister Maud to join him, and replaced the Stotts and Ann Anderson in their industrial mission stations.

And in the Happy Valley he may remain another ten years yet, till he becomes a walking compendium of information on the past and present of East Africa.

When he is 72 and Maud is 74 — a wonder as regards resistance to African germ diseases — it is just